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Ruins, Reconstruction and Representation: Photography and the City in Postwar Western Europe (1945-58)

Tom Allbeson

This comparative cultural history of urban photography addresses France, Britain and West Germany during the period of reconstruction after the Second World War. It considers images circulating in the public sphere (including books, professional journals, popular magazines and official publications) and examines how the mediation through photography of architecture, urban space and everyday life shaped ways of seeing and thinking about cities in postwar Western Europe.

Analysis focuses on four key fields: ruin photography in commemorative books (1945-49); representations of mass housing projects through architectural photography in the architectural press and official publications (1947-54); urban scenes in photographic magazines (1949-55); and urban photography in UNESCO's early campaigns regarding human rights and intercultural understanding, as well as images of the institution's purpose-built headquarters in Paris (1949-58).

Whether of burned-out façades or sunlit concrete tower blocks, the wealth of publicly circulating images cohered in a set of specific discursive formations which, in dynamic and productive relation with one another, offered determinate perspectives on key topics of the reconstruction period. Moreover, in the transition from enmity to unity between the comparator nations which characterised the aftermath of total war and the escalation of the Cold War, the image of the city became a vital component of postwar Western European cultural identity facilitating the expression of important imagined communities, spaces and futures.

Informed by the interdisciplinary field of photography studies, this research offers an interpretive analysis of dominant discursive formations, identifying the perspectives offered by postwar urban photography and excavating its relation to questions of cultural memory and forgetting, to national histories and imagined transnational communities, and to international relations and utopian thinking. It develops an innovative methodology for the interpretation of photography in the writing of cultural history and delivers a comparative historical analysis of a vital aspect of transnational postwar visual culture.

**Ruins, Reconstruction and Representation:
Photography and the City in Postwar Western Europe (1945-58)**

Tom Allbeson

PhD Thesis

School of Modern Languages and Cultures / Department of History
Durham University

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- 3.3.12 Two photographs of children in front of tower block façades and one close-up of balconies, Churchill Gardens; Henry-Russell Hitchcock, 'Pimlico: An Assessment of Westminster City Council's Churchill Gardens', *Architectural Review*, 681 (1953), 176-184 (p. 182); photographer: Peter Pitt
- 3.3.13 Photograph of housing block inserted into historic streetscape, Churchill Gardens; Henry-Russell Hitchcock, 'Pimlico: An Assessment of Westminster City Council's Churchill Gardens', *Architectural Review*, 681 (1953), 176-184 (p. 181); photographer: Peter Pitt
- 3.3.14 Shop fronts on Lupus Street, Churchill Gardens; Henry-Russell Hitchcock, 'Pimlico: An Assessment of Westminster City Council's Churchill Gardens', *Architectural Review*, 681 (1953), 176-184 (p. 181); photographer: Peter Pitt
- 3.3.15 Kindergarten on the roof of Unité housing block, Marseille; 'Le Corbusier's Unité d'habitation', *Architectural Review*, 653 (1951), 292-300 (p. 292); photographer unknown (possibly Lucien Hervé)
- 3.3.16 One architectural drawing of the Unité housing block, Marseille, one wide-angle photograph and two photographs of architectural details of same; 'Le Corbusier's Unité d'habitation', *Architectural Review*, 653 (1951), 292-300 (p. 292); photographers unknown (possibly Lucien Hervé and Pierre Liénard)
- 3.4.1 Montage of architectural photographs and newspaper cuttings; cover of Presse- und Informationsamt der Bundesregierung, *Deutschland im Wiederaufbau* (Bonn: Deutscher Bundesverlag, 1951); graphic designer and photographer unknown
- 3.4.2 Illustration of the geometric pattern of a tower-block façade with title superimposed; cover of Bruno E. Werner, *Neues Bauen in Deutschland* (Munich: F. Bruckmann, 1952); illustrator unknown
- 3.4.3 Three 'aerial' photographs of models of Hannover city centre before bombing, after destruction and after reconstruction; Bruno E. Werner, *Neues Bauen in Deutschland* (Munich: F. Bruckmann, 1952), pp. 16-17; photographer: Hans Wagner
- 3.4.4 Grindelhochhäuser tower blocks, Hamburg; Bruno E. Werner, *Neues Bauen in Deutschland* (Munich: F. Bruckmann, 1952), p. 25; photograph credited to 'Vondran, München'
- 3.4.5 Fifteen photographs of everyday life in a high-rise building, Grindelhochhäuser, Hamburg; 'Im Hochhaus wohnt sich's besser!', *Constanze: Die Zeitschrift für die Frau*, 1 March 1951, pp. 8-9
- 3.4.6 Family on a balcony in a tower block, Finsbury, London; George Bruce, 'A New Life – Eleven Floors Up', *Illustrated*, 13 March 1954, pp. 11-13 (p. 11); photographer: Michael McKeown
- 3.4.7 Five photographs of everyday life in a tower block, Finsbury; George Bruce, 'A New Life – Eleven Floors Up', *Illustrated*, 13 March 1954, pp. 11-13 (p. 11); photographer: Michael McKeown
- 3.4.8 High-rise building viewed through the branches of a tree, Grindelhochhäuser, Hamburg; Heinz Laubach, 'Le Problème du logement', in *Architecture et reconstruction en Allemagne* (Offenbourg en Bade: Bureau international de liaison et documentation, 1952), pp. 42-9 (p. 45)

- 3.4.9 Close-up photograph of three balconies of a housing block, Frankfurt; Heinz Laubach, 'Le Problème du logement', in *Architecture et reconstruction en Allemagne* (Offenbourg en Bade: Bureau international de liaison et documentation, 1952), pp. 42-9 (p. 44)
- 3.4.10 Four balconies and a man, Bauhaus building, Dessau, 1926; photographer: László Moholy-Nagy
- 3.4.11 Two contrasting photographs of a street of ruins and of new housing, Stalinallee, Berlin; frontispiece of Gerhard Puhlmann, *Die Stalinallee: Nationales Aufbauprogramm, 1952* (Berlin: Verlag der Nation, 1952), n. pag; photographer: Gerhard Puhlmann
- 3.4.12 Four juxtaposed photographs of different façade decoration, Stalinallee; Gerhard Puhlmann, *Die Stalinallee: Nationales Aufbauprogramm, 1952* (Berlin: Verlag der Nation, 1952), n. pag; photographer: Gerhard Puhlmann
- 3.4.13 Drawing of two towers at Frankfurter Tor, Stalinallee; Gerhard Puhlmann, *Die Stalinallee: Nationales Aufbauprogramm, 1952* (Berlin: Verlag der Nation, 1952), n. pag; illustrator unknown (possibly the chief architect, Hermann Henselmann)
- 3.4.14 Woman working in the ruins, Berlin; Gerhard Puhlmann, *Die Stalinallee: Nationales Aufbauprogramm, 1952* (Berlin: Verlag der Nation, 1952), n. pag; photographer: Gerhard Puhlmann
- 3.4.15 Young boy and old man taking a break from working in the ruins, Berlin; Gerhard Puhlmann, *Die Stalinallee: Nationales Aufbauprogramm, 1952* (Berlin: Verlag der Nation, 1952), n. pag; photographer: Gerhard Puhlmann
- 3.4.16 Photographic portraits of four young men praised for their contribution to the reconstruction effort; Gerhard Puhlmann, *Die Stalinallee: Nationales Aufbauprogramm, 1952* (Berlin: Verlag der Nation, 1952), n. pag; photographer: Gerhard Puhlmann
- 3.4.17 Photographs of a sculptor and a metalworker at work on decorative detail, Stalinallee; Gerhard Puhlmann, *Die Stalinallee: Nationales Aufbauprogramm, 1952* (Berlin: Verlag der Nation, 1952), n. pag; photographer: Gerhard Puhlmann
- 3.4.18 Photograph of painter working on a picture of Stalinallee juxtaposed with image of workers admiring other drawings and paintings of same; Gerhard Puhlmann, *Die Stalinallee: Nationales Aufbauprogramm, 1952* (Berlin: Verlag der Nation, 1952), n. pag; photographer: Gerhard Puhlmann
- 3.4.19 Panorama of Stalinallee housing blocks under construction seen from rooftop; Gerhard Puhlmann, *Die Stalinallee: Nationales Aufbauprogramm, 1952* (Berlin: Verlag der Nation, 1952), n. pag; photographer: Gerhard Puhlmann
- 3.4.20 Juxtaposition of two panoramic photographs of Stalinallee under construction and following completion; Gerhard Puhlmann, *Die Stalinallee: Nationales Aufbauprogramm, 1952* (Berlin: Verlag der Nation, 1952), n. pag; photographer: Gerhard Puhlmann
- 3.4.21 Two plans and one section of the Unité housing block, Marseille, and one photograph of the façade on Boulevard Michelet; Klaus Müller-Rehm, *Wohnbauten von Heute* (Berlin: Rembrandt, 1955), p. 127; photographer: Pierre Liénard

- 3.4.22 Unité housing block, Marseille, pictured in parkland setting with trees in foreground; Klaus Müller-Rehm, *Wohnbauten von Heute* (Berlin: Rembrandt, 1955), p. 130; photographer unknown
- 3.4.23 Stairwells of Churchill Gardens housing estate, Pimlico, London; Klaus Müller-Rehm, *Wohnbauten von Heute* (Berlin: Rembrandt, 1955), p. 145; photographer: Peter Pitt
- 3.4.24 Housing block viewed from across the Thames with boat in the foreground, Churchill Gardens; Klaus Müller-Rehm, *Wohnbauten von Heute* (Berlin: Rembrandt, 1955), p. 144; photographer unknown (possibly Peter Pitt)
- 3.4.25 Tower block viewed through the trees, Harlow new town, Essex; Klaus Müller-Rehm, *Wohnbauten von Heute* (Berlin: Rembrandt, 1955), p. 147; photographer: H. L. Wainwright
- 3.4.26 Exterior of apartment block, Cologne; Klaus Müller-Rehm, *Wohnbauten von Heute* (Berlin: Rembrandt, 1955), p. 169; photographer unknown
- 3.4.27 Interior of flat with floor-to-ceiling windows, Cologne; Klaus Müller-Rehm, *Wohnbauten von Heute* (Berlin: Rembrandt, 1955), p. 170; photographer unknown
- 3.4.28 Stairwell of apartment block with trees in foreground, Bad Godesburg, Bonn; Klaus Müller-Rehm, *Wohnbauten von Heute* (Berlin: Rembrandt, 1955), p. 195; photographer unknown

- 3.5.1 Collage of architectural drawing and photographs, 1951; Golden Lane Estate design competition entry, Alison and Peter Smithson; illustrator unknown

- 4.1 Two fashion models with hats, coats and umbrellas; cover of *Heute*, 28 February 1951; photographer unknown
- 4.2 Dancer and actress Moira Shearer; cover of *Illustrated*, 25 November 1950; photographer unknown
- 4.3 Female diver; cover of *Point de vue: Images du monde*, 2 August 1951; photographer unknown (possibly Jacques-Yves Cousteau)
- 4.4 Fashion model in evening gown; *Paris-Match*, 8 September 1951; photographer unknown
- 4.5 Town square of the East German new town StalinStadt [Eisenhüttenstadt], with inset portrait of photographer Hilmar Pabel with a camera; cover of *Quick*, 25 March 1955; photographer: Hilmar Pabel
- 4.6 Photographs of five crowns; *Picture Post*, 6 December 1952; photographer unknown
- 4.7 Photographs of Berlin Airlift, a woman drinking a cocktail, Winston Churchill holding his hand in front of his face and an American publisher surveying French titles; *Paris-Match*, 25 March 1949; photographers unknown

- 4.1.1 Two pairs of contrasting images of Cologne showing American soldiers in the city (1945) and celebrations in the same location (1949), as well as a masked ball in the the Güzernich hall (1939) and the ruins of the hall and the adjacent St Alban's church after bombing; "Fastelovend" ist unbesiegbar!', *Neue Illustrierte*,

- 16 February 1950, p. 3; photographs credited to 'Zimmermann', 'Jaeschke' and 'Felten'
- 4.1.2 Avenue des Champs-Élysées at twilight, Paris; cover of *Paris-Match*, 28 July 1951; photographer: Izis [Israëlis Bidermanas]
 - 4.1.3 Seven night-time colour photographs of Paris including Sacré-Cœur, the Arc de Triomphe and the Place de la Concorde; 'Les nuits de Paris ont aussi leurs couleurs', *Paris-Match*, 28 July 1951, pp. 22-23; photographer: Izis
 - 4.1.4 The Skylon and Dome of Discovery at night, South Bank, London; cover of *Festival of Britain: Souvenir in Pictures* (London: News Chronicle, 1951); photographer: Barnet Saidman
 - 4.1.5 The Thames and the South Bank at night; *Festival of Britain: Souvenir in Pictures* (London: News Chronicle, 1951), n. pag; photographer: Barnet Saidman
 - 4.1.6 Three photographs inside the British Museum, of bomb-damage in the City of London and inside Westminster Hall; H. V. Morton, 'The City has Two Faces', *Illustrated*, 12 May 1951, pp. 12-15 (pp. 12-13); photographer: Henri Cartier-Bresson
 - 4.1.7 Two contrasting images of a woman observing a sculpture (originally from the frieze of the Parthenon) in the British Museum and two men looking at a bomb site in Cheapside, London; H. V. Morton, 'The City has Two Faces', *Illustrated*, 12 May 1951, pp. 12-15 (p. 14); photographer: Henri Cartier-Bresson
 - 4.1.8 Ten photographs of the Skylon and its audience, South Bank; 'Any more for the Skylon?', *Illustrated*, 2 June 1951, pp. 22-23; photographer: R. Saidman
 - 4.1.9 Children at a street party in celebration of the Coronation; 'Straße gesperrt – Krönungsparty für Kinder', *Quick*, 14 June 1953, p. 41; photographer: Hilmar Pabel
 - 4.1.10 Two juxtaposed, full-page photographs of the newly-crowned Queen Elizabeth and a crowd of spectators; *Point de vue – Images du monde*, 11 June 1953, pp. 10-11; photographer unknown
 - 4.2.1 Nine photographs of women modelling spring clothing; 'Paris: Frühjahrskostüme', *Heute*, 11 April 1951, pp. 26-27; photographer: Regina Relang
 - 4.2.2 Photograph of a fashion model in front of a newsstand and illustration of a woman reading a newspaper with the Eiffel Tower in the background; 'Fashion is where you find it', *Illustrated*, 9 June 1951, pp. 29-31 (p. 29); photographer: Joseph McKeown, illustrator unknown
 - 4.2.3 Seven photographs of seemingly French street scenes (although photographed in London) with complementary illustrations of French street scenes; 'Fashion is where you find it', *Illustrated*, 9 June 1951, pp. 29-31 (pp. 30-31); photographer: Joseph McKeown, illustrator unknown
 - 4.2.4 Three photographs of fashion models around Paris (captioned 'Ces photos seront vraies demain ...' / 'These photos will come true tomorrow ...'); 'La nouvelle mode', *Paris-Match*, 8 September 1951, pp. 16-21 (pp. 16-17); photographers: Olga Kevorkoff, André Lacaze and Walter Carone

- 4.2.5 Six photographs of Fort Mont-Valérien, Paris; 'Ici ont été fusillés 1.500 français', *Paris-Match*, 8 September 1951, pp. 12-15 (pp. 12-13); photographer: J. de Potier
- 4.2.6 Seven photographs of women in hats and coats, five of the images showing men looking at the models; 'Hüte mite in bisschen Gold', *Heute*, 28 February 1951, pp. 28-29; photographer unknown
- 4.2.7 Six photographs of people in Hyde Park, London; Richard Dimbleby, 'The Manor of Hyde', *Illustrated*, 19 August 1950, pp. 26-31 (pp. 26-27); photographers: Ernst Auerbach and Ernst Haas
- 4.2.8 Seven photographs of people in Hyde Park; 'Hyde Park', *Point de vue – Images du monde*, 2 August 1951, pp. 12-13; photographer: Ernst Haas
- 4.2.9 Six photographs depicting landscaping as a solution to the rubble mountains in German towns including Cologne, Munich and Berlin; 'Neue Berge im Deutschland', *Weltbild*, 1 July 1952, pp. 16-17; photographs credited to 'Rogge', 'Gronefeld' and 'Fischer'
- 4.2.10 Four photographs of people taking a break; 'La Pause: la nécessité humaine de la vie moderne', *Point de vue – Images du monde*, 29 Oct 1953, p. 25; photographers: Robert Doisneau, Maurice Zalewski and Hora Dumas
- 4.2.11 Six photographs of young couples kissing in Paris streets; 'Speaking of Pictures: In Paris Young Lovers Kiss Wherever They Want and Nobody Seems to Care', *Life*, 12 June 1950, pp. 16-17; photographer: Robert Doisneau
- 4.3.1 Seven photographs of postwar life in Berlin, principal image showing ruined buildings on the Spree and others depicting individuals at home; 'Berlin, 12 Mars 1949', *Paris-Match*, 25 March 1949, pp. 18-20 (pp. 18-19); photographer unknown
- 4.3.2 Ten photographs of everyday life in Germany illustrating selected issues five years after war's end (captions include 'Aufbau' / 'Construction', 'Flucht' / 'Escapism', 'Hilfe' / 'Help' (referring to the Marshall Plan), 'Liebe' / 'Romance', 'Zukunft' / 'The future' (with reference to children), and 'Vergangenheit' / 'The past'); 'Deutschland in Jahr 5', *Quick*, 1 January 1950, pp. 9-11 (pp. 9-10); photographers: David Seymour, Klaus von K lmer and Hanns Hubmann
- 4.3.3 Two photographs of a man reading the newspaper in the rubble of Berlin and a woman at a market; 'Berlin 1950', *Picture Post*, 14 Oct 1950, pp.11-17 (p. 11); photographer: Umbo [Otto Umbeh r]
- 4.3.4 Five photographs illustrating aspects of everyday for the Matuczewski family (main caption: 'The pattern of a working-class family's life in present-day Berlin'); 'Berlin 1950', *Picture Post*, 14 Oct 1950, pp.11-17 (pp. 12-13); photographer: Umbo
- 4.3.5 Four photographs from the streets of the ruined former capital and portraits of four architects working in Berlin (Heinrich Tessenow, Hans Scharoun, Friedrich F rlinger and Alfred Roth); 'Berlin 1950', *Picture Post*, 14 Oct 1950, pp.11-17 (pp. 14-15); photographer: Umbo
- 4.3.6 Soldier guarding the Soviet war memorial in the Tiergarten with the ruined Reichstag in the background (captioned 'Berlin's two memorials'); Willi Frischauer, 'Europe's Strangest City', *Illustrated*, 8 September 1951, pp. 11-15 (p. 11); photographer: Henri Cartier-Bresson

- 4.3.7 A dozen photographs of people on the Kurfürstendamm, Berlin; Willi Frischauer, 'Europe's Strangest City', *Illustrated*, 8 September 1951, pp. 11-15 (p. 14); photographer: Henri Cartier-Bresson
 - 4.3.8 Five photographs showing both the dead after the bombing of Dresden and state-sponsored visual material in the cityscape; 'Propaganda mit dem Tod', *Neue Illustrierte*, 2 March 1950, p. 6; photographer unknown
 - 4.3.9 An American woman reading *The Bamberg Herald*, Bamberg, South Carolina; cover of *Neue Illustrierte*, 19 April 1950; photographer: Wolfgang Weber
 - 4.3.10 Eleven photographs of street signs and everyday life in American towns with the same names as German towns; 'Hamburg, Jena, Gotha, Stuttgart und Hamburg gelegen in den USA!', *Neue Illustrierte*, 19 April 1950, pp. 8-9 (p. 8); photographer: Wolfgang Weber
 - 4.3.11 Five photographs of the 1953 uprising in East Berlin; 'Der Aufstand von Berlin', *Quick*, 28 June 1953, pp. 3-8 (pp. 4-5); photographer unknown
 - 4.3.12 Four boys pretend to be soldiers in the ruins of Bonn with a copy of *Heute* tacked to the wall bearing a portrait of Dwight D. Eisenhower; Jean-Paul Penez, 'Ils ont résolu à leur façon le plus grave problème de l'Europe', *Paris-Match*, 20 June 1951, p. 27; photographer: Maurice Jarnoux
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- 4.4.1 Audrey Hepburn in Kew Gardens; 'We take a girl to look for spring', *Picture Post*, 13 May 1950, pp. 43-45 (p. 44); photographer: Bert Hardy
 - 4.4.2 Four scenes from a fairground; 'Prévert et Izis ont fait un duo en soixante-deux photos-poèmes', *Paris-Match*, 5 January 1952, pp. 38-39; photographer: Izis [Israëlis Bidermanas]
 - 4.4.3 Three examples of street photography from London, Mexico and the Paris suburbs; 'Cartier-Bresson: Le grand poète de la photographie présente ses chefs-d'oeuvre', *Paris-Match*, 11 October 1952, pp. 34-39 (pp. 34-35); photographer: Henri Cartier-Bresson
 - 4.4.4 Photographer Hans Ertl with a camera under his hat; cover of *Quick*, 29 January 1950; photographer unknown
 - 4.4.5 Five examples of reportage and a portrait of photographer Hanns Hubmann; 'Dem *Quick*-Leser gehört die Welt', *Quick*, 29 Jan 1950, pp. 4-10 (p. 6); photographers: Hanns Hubmann and Ursel Hubmann
 - 4.4.6 Five photographs of a small, light-weight car; 'Klein, aber oho!', *Heute*, 28 July 1951, p. 24; photographer unknown
 - 4.4.7 Five diverse examples of successful portrait photographs for the illustrated press; Bert Hardy, 'Don't Let the Picture Get Away', *Picture Post*, 23 June 1951, pp. 38-9; photographer: Bert Hardy
 - 4.4.8 Two young women sitting on railings at the seafront, Blackpool; 'Bert Hardy's box-camera Blackpool', *Picture Post*, 14 July 1951, pp. 38-40 (p. 39); photographer Bert Hardy
 - 4.4.9 Six examples of successful photographs for the illustrated press, categorised as people, events, current affairs, animals, sport and impact or action shots ('Effekt und überraschende Wirkung'); 'Amateur Reporter', *Heute*, 25 April 1951, pp. 20-21; photographers: Ernst Haas and other unknown photographers

- 4.4.10 Prize-winning entries in a competition to create a Kodak advertisement; 'Le concours de la photo publicitaire', *Point de vue – Images du monde*, 28 April 1955, p. 21
- 4.4.11 Camera shop hoarding, Cologne, 2010; author's own photograph

- 4.5.1 Three photographs of young West German adults on a road trip to Paris; Wolfgang Fischer, 'Unser Hotel fährt 80 Kilometer', *Quick*, 30 April 1955, pp. 6-9 (pp. 6-7); photographer unknown
- 4.5.2 Seven photographs of the 'mobile hotel' and bus, as well as one photograph of a Parisian market; Wolfgang Fischer, 'Unser Hotel fährt 80 Kilometer', *Quick*, 30 April 1955, pp. 6-9 (pp. 8-9); photographer unknown
- 4.5.3 View from the top of the Eiffel Tower; Lucien Hervé, 'Réhabilitation de la Tour Eiffel', *Point de vue – Image du monde*, 19 July 1951, pp. 29-31 (p. 29); photographer: Lucien Hervé
- 4.5.4 One photograph of visitors to the Eiffel Tower and ten photographs of details or views of the Tower; Lucien Hervé, 'Réhabilitation de la Tour Eiffel', *Point de vue – Image du monde*, 19 July 1951, pp. 29-31 (pp. 30-31); photographer: Lucien Hervé
- 4.5.5 Chancellor Konrad Adenauer and ambassador André François-Poncet pictured in an aeroplane from Bonn to Paris, along with 12 photographs of them touring the French capital, and a principal image of the two men in front of the Eiffel Tower; 'Vorfrühling und Verständigung', *Neue Münchner Illustrierte*, 28 April 1951, pp. 6-7; photographer: Hannes Betzler
- 4.5.6 Advert for Ilford photographic film comprising photographs of Tower Bridge, a child, a cat, a woman in swimwear and Westminster Abbey; British illustrated press, early 1950s; photographer unknown

- 5.1 Boy framed by shadows, photographed from above; Jean Roubier, 'L'Opinion d'un membre du jury', *Photo-Cinéma*, 624 (1953), 184-189 (p. 186); photographer: Lucien Hervé
- 5.2 Woman asleep against a tree under a Union Jack; Jean Roubier, 'L'Opinion d'un membre du jury', *Photo-Cinéma*, 624 (1953), 184-189 (p. 188); photographer: Izis [Israëlis Bidermanas]

- 5.1.1 Signboard introducing 'We the Peoples' photographic exhibition to celebrate 10th anniversary of the United Nations, San Francisco, June 1955; UNESCO Archive, OPI/Photos 1/55, 'Expositions au Siège, 1953-1964', ref. UN46349; photographer unknown
- 5.1.2 Teenagers standing in front of photographic display, 'We the Peoples' exhibition, San Francisco, June 1955; UNESCO Archive, OPI/Photos 1/55, 'Expositions au Siège, 1953-1964', ref. UN46363; photographer unknown
- 5.1.3 Photograph of 'We the Peoples' exhibition, San Francisco, June 1955; UNESCO Archive, OPI/Photos 1/55, 'Expositions au Siège, 1953-1964', ref. UN46359; photographer unknown

- 5.1.4 Edward Steichen at a UNESCO-sponsored conference about photography and film, Paris, May 1955; 'Les rencontres international sûr le rôle de l'image dans le civilisation contemporaine et la création d'un centre international de la photographie (fixe et animée)', *Photo-Monde*, 47-48 (1955), 86-90 (p. 90); photographer unknown
- 5.1.5 Schoolboy amid ruins, Pforzheim, 1949; Museum of Modern Art, *The Family of Man* (New York: Maco Magazine Corporation, 1955) p. 127; photographer: Otto Hagel
- 5.2.1 Poster for the 1949 UNESCO exhibition, 'Les Droits de l'homme'; UNESCO Archive, MC/Droits de l'homme/48; illustrator: Jacques N. Garamond
- 5.2.2 Extract from pamphlet on installation accompanying UNESCO, *Human Rights Exhibition Album* (Paris: UNESCO, 1950)
- 5.2.3 The ruined Temple of Poseidon; UNESCO, *Human Rights Exhibition Album* (Paris: UNESCO, 1950), plate 13; photographer: Antoine Bon
- 5.2.4 Illustration of the destruction of the Bastille; UNESCO, *Human Rights Exhibition Album* (Paris: UNESCO, 1950), plate 17; illustrator unknown
- 5.2.5 Four photographs representing political activism including (A) the US presidential campaign, 1944, (B) public reading of a newspaper 'among the Kirghiz', (C) political posters on a Paris wall, and (D) a speaker at Hyde Park corner (titled 'Freedom of thought and opinion'); UNESCO, *Human Rights Exhibition Album* (Paris: UNESCO, 1950), plate 77; photographer unknown
- 5.2.6 Photographs of nine places of worship in Paris including a mosque, synagogue and churches for different Christian denominations (titled 'Freedom of religion'); UNESCO, *Human Rights Exhibition Album* (Paris: UNESCO, 1950), plate 73; photographer unknown
- 5.2.7 Four photographs of sculpted heads from different historical cultures (titled 'Liberty of creative work' and captioned 'A. Negro art. B. Buddhist art. C. Egyptian art (Head of a colossal statue of Amenophis IV, Karnak). D. Totonacan art (Terra-cotta).'); UNESCO, *Human Rights Exhibition Album* (Paris: UNESCO, 1950), plate 92; photographer unknown
- 5.2.8 Four photographs of sculpted or mosaic heads from different historical cultures (titled 'Liberty of creative work' and captioned 'A. Greek art (Head of an Aphebe, 5th century B.C.). B. Byzantine art (Mosaic in the church of St Ambrose, Milan, 9th century). C. Aztec art. D. Romanesque art (Head of Clovis, Church of Notre-Dame, Corbeil, 12th century).'); UNESCO, *Human Rights Exhibition Album* (Paris: UNESCO, 1950), plate 93; photographer unknown
- 5.2.9 André Malraux surveying photographs, c.1951; photographer: Maurice Jarnoux
- 5.3.1 Two children in a *bidonville* or shanty town; frontispiece of UNESCO, *The Book of Needs* (Paris: UNESCO, 1947); photographer: Robert Doisneau
- 5.3.2 Two young destitute children; cover of David Seymour, *Children of Europe* (Paris: UNESCO, 1949)
- 5.3.3 Three boys walking down a street lined with ruined buildings (trilingual caption in French, English and Spanish: 'Millions of children first knew life amongst death and destruction'); David Seymour, *Children of Europe* (Paris: UNESCO, 1949); n. pag; photographer: David Seymour

- 5.3.4 Three photographs of children playing among the ruins (trilingual caption: 'Our playground: ruins. Our toys: shell-cases and bombs'); David Seymour, *Children of Europe* (Paris: UNESCO, 1949); n. pag; photographer: David Seymour
- 5.3.5 Two children holding empty cups up to the camera (trilingual caption: 'Milk for the children sometimes, but they need it every day'); David Seymour, *Children of Europe* (Paris: UNESCO, 1949); n. pag; photographer: David Seymour
- 5.3.6 Advertisement and order form for David Seymour, *Children of Europe* (Paris: UNESCO, 1949), appearing in UNESCO newsletter on reconstruction, *Impetus*
- 5.3.7 Advertisement and order form for David Seymour, *Children of Europe* (Paris: UNESCO, 1949), appearing in UNESCO newsletter on reconstruction, *Impetus*
- 5.3.8 Children exercising in front of a gutted building (trilingual caption: 'Teachers do their best. You can count on them – and on us – but you must give us a fair chance'); David Seymour, *Children of Europe* (Paris: UNESCO, 1949); n. pag; photographer: David Seymour
- 5.3.9 Young women working in the rubble (trilingual caption: 'Give us the tools, and we will help to build the new world'); David Seymour, *Children of Europe* (Paris: UNESCO, 1949); n. pag; photographer: David Seymour
- 5.3.10 Children and globe at Babson Institute of Business Administration, Wellesley, Massachusetts; cover of *UNESCO Courier*, 12 (1956); photographer: Roy F. Whitehouse
- 5.3.11 Children link hands and play in front of a background of ruins; David Seymour, *Children of Europe* (Paris: UNESCO, 1949); n. pag; photographer: David Seymour
- 5.4.1 Three photographs of St Paul's Cathedral during the Blitz, the Hôtel Majestic, Paris (first home of UNESCO) and the new UNESCO Headquarters under construction, Place Fontenoy, Paris; Julian Huxley, Jaime Torres Bodet and Luther H. Evans, 'UNESCO's First Ten Years', *UNESCO Courier*, 11 (1958) 4-5; photographers: Herbert Mason (St Paul's), other images credited to UNESCO
- 5.4.2 View from the Eiffel Tower, down the Champ de Mars to the Place Fontenoy and the new UNESCO Headquarters; Lucien Hervé, *Unesco Headquarters in Paris* (Stuttgart: Gerd Hatje, 1958), p. 1; photographer: Lucien Hervé
- 5.4.3 UNESCO Headquarters with Eiffel Tower in the background; Lucien Hervé, *Unesco Headquarters in Paris* (Stuttgart: Gerd Hatje, 1958), pp. 92-93; photographer: Lucien Hervé
- 5.4.4 Photographs of artworks by Pablo Picasso, Henry Moore and Alexander Calder; Douglas Cooper, 'The Sacrifice of an Ideal', *The Sunday Times*, 26 October 1958, Magazine Section, p. 23; photographer: Pierre Belzeux
- 5.4.5 UNESCO Headquarters viewed from the Eiffel Tower (caption: 'Dans le vieux Paris de l'Ecole Militaire, le monde tout neuf de l'Unesco' / 'In the old Paris of the Ecole Militaire, the new world of UNESCO'); *Pax Christi*, 1 (1959), n. pag; photograph credited to 'Perretty'
- 5.4.6 Four photographs of the exterior and interior of UNESCO Headquarters; Robert Faure, 'UNESCO: Paris a bâti pour elle le palais le plus révolutionnaire et le plus controversé ...', *La Dépêche du midi*, 9 November 1958, p. 5; multiple photographers including Marc Riboud (top left) and Albert Raccah (bottom right)

- 5.4.7 UNESCO Headquarters with Eiffel Tower in the background; 'Supermodernes UNESCO-Gebäude wurde in Paris eingeweiht', *Nürnberger Nachrichten*, 4 November 1958; photographer: Albert Raccah
- 5.4.8 Wall of UNESCO Conference Building; Cover of Lucien Hervé, *Le Siège de l'Unesco à Paris* (Paris: Editions Freal, 1958); photographer: Lucien Hervé
- 5.4.9 The Eiffel Tower viewed from the terrace of the UNESCO Secretariat Building; Lucien Hervé, *Unesco Headquarters in Paris* (Stuttgart: Gerd Hatje, 1958), p. 47; photographer: Lucien Hervé
- 5.4.10 Two photographs of intercommunicating doors and fenestration in offices, UNESCO Secretariat Building; Lucien Hervé, *Unesco Headquarters in Paris* (Stuttgart: Gerd Hatje, 1958), pp. 34-35; photographer: Lucien Hervé
- 5.4.11 Two photographs of *brise soleil* on UNESCO Secretariat Building and concrete wall of Conference Building; Lucien Hervé, *Unesco Headquarters in Paris* (Stuttgart: Gerd Hatje, 1958), pp. 17-18; photographer: Lucien Hervé

- 5.5.1 Three dead American soldiers, Buna Beach, New Guinea; *Life*, 20 September 1943, p. 35; UNESCO, *Human Rights Exhibition Album* (Paris: UNESCO, 1950), plate 24; photographer: George Strock
- 5.5.2 Mixed media illustration (titled 'Mordabella') 2009; cover of *UNESCO Courier*, 3 (2011); illustrator: Ghassan Halwani

Europe in the aftermath of the Second World War offered a prospect of utter misery and desolation. Photographs and documentary films of the time show pitiful streams of helpless civilians trekking through a blasted landscape of broken cities and barren fields. Orphaned children wander forlornly past groups of worn out women picking over heaps of masonry.

Tony Judt¹

The image of the ruined city loomed large in the years immediately after the Second World War. In the cities and towns of Europe, civilians had been caught up in the destructive force of war to an unprecedented extent. After 1945, they faced the seemingly insurmountable task of reconstruction and recovery. That Tony Judt should start his epic account of Europe in the second half of the twentieth century with this striking image highlights not only the central role of urban space in the war and its aftermath, but also the vital position of image-making technology in the representations of wartime destruction and postwar reconstruction. But, while these images play a part in constructing our understanding of the period, it is an understanding lacking in crucial respects. The vast corpus of images is often distilled to a handful of iconic photographs used to illustrate political, social and economic histories of the period between VE Day and the start of the 1960s. What is overlooked in this process of selection and reproduction is the active role photography played in contemporary debates and decisions relating to postwar reconstruction. The images Judt refers to are not simply inert or transparent documents; they were active in shaping ways of looking at and thinking about urban space in postwar Europe. This study considers urban photography from France, Britain and West Germany between 1945 and 1958, identifying the dynamic role played by photographs of architecture and urban space during the period of reconstruction in communicating and promoting pivotal attitudes, ideas and perspectives on the city, the nation and Western Europe.²

¹ Tony Judt, *Postwar: A History of Europe Since 1945* (London: Pimlico, 2007), p. 13.

² The three comparator countries are considered here as emblematic of Western Europe, while Western Europe is considered as distinct not only from Eastern Europe (which came under the

While the city has always been central to conflict,³ the destruction of European urban centres during the Second World War was on an exceptional scale, whether as a result of the bombing war after 1940, Nazi actions against civilian populations, the Allied invasion of Normandy in 1944, or the Battle of Berlin in 1945.⁴ However, the civilian fatalities and the challenge of postwar reconstruction differed greatly amongst the three nations considered here. Cities like London, Coventry, Southampton and Exeter were attacked during the Blitz, although Britain was never subject to invasion or land battles. Caen, Le Havre, Rouen and Saint-Lô were devastated as a result of the Normandy Landings, the extensive destruction of towns from both aerial bombardment and military advances and retreats, adding to that of the German invasion in 1940. In Germany, while Dresden and Cologne are readily associated with Allied bombing, the complete list of targeted towns and the statistics regarding aircrafts deployed is breathtaking.⁵ Similar numbers died as a result of bombing in France and Britain, with a total number of around 60,000 fatalities in each country. Deaths in Germany caused by

influence of the Soviet Union), but also Northern and Southern or Mediterranean Europe. The social and cultural history of a nation like Poland in the postwar period is considered too divergent and distinct to be covered here, although comparisons with the situation in East Germany (latterly the German Democratic Republic) will be made where they shed light on the situation in West Germany (latterly the Federal Republic of Germany). Nations like Norway, Spain and Greece also underwent broad social and cultural change in the period, but the extent of change and the nature of the postwar experience are likewise beyond the scope of this study.

³ As Stephen Graham notes, 'The widespread survival of massive urban fortifications – especially in Asia, Africa, Latin America, and Europe – are a living testament to the fact that, in premodern and pre-nation-state civilizations, city-states were the actual agents, as well as the main targets, of war' (*Cities, War, and Terrorism: Towards an Urban Geopolitics*, ed. by Stephen Graham (Oxford: Blackwell, 2004), p. 2).

⁴ Notable European wartime urban destruction and postwar reconstruction projects which fall outside the scope of this study include the contrasting situations of Rotterdam and Warsaw. The former was the subject of German bombardment in 1940, part of the invasion of the Netherlands, and was rebuilt principally in a modernist style (including Jakob B. Bakema's Lijnbaan shopping district, completed in 1953). The latter was destroyed by the Nazis in 1944 following the uprising of Polish resistance forces. A historical restoration was undertaken and the city centre was designated a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 2009. Of course, urban destruction was not limited to Europe. Also outside the scope of this study is the destruction by atomic bomb of Hiroshima and Nagasaki by Allied forces in August 1945, photography of which was banned in US-occupied postwar Japan (Steve Edwards, *Photography: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), p. 38). The ruin of the Genbaku Dome still stands as part of the Peace Memorial Park, for which work began in 1950. It was designated a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1996. A selection of images commissioned by the United States government and now held by the International Center of Photography, New York was published in 2011 (*Hiroshima: Ground Zero, 1945*, ed. by Erin Barnett and Philomena Mariani (Göttingen: Steidl, 2011)).

⁵ A. C. Grayling, *Among the Dead Cities: Was the Allied Bombing of Civilians in WWII a Necessity or a Crime?* (London: Bloomsbury, 2007), pp. 295–340.

aerial bombardment are estimated to be 410,000.⁶ In addition to disparities of death and of destruction, the social and political consequences of the war in the three comparator countries also differed radically. In 1945, Britain was victorious, but the impact of 'total war' was great both financially and in terms of the questioning of the prewar social order which it precipitated. France, liberated the previous year, had to deal with the legacy of occupation by the Nazis and the collaboration of the Vichy government. Germany, now defeated, was occupied and administered by a coalition consisting of the United States, Britain, France and the Soviet Union. The crimes of the Holocaust, committed in the name of the Reich, were exhibited to the German people and the world through the work of photographers like George Rodger, Margaret Bourke-White and Lee Miller from the camps at Bergen-Belsen, Buchenwald and Dachau. And yet, notwithstanding these striking differences, the postwar years saw these three nations inextricably linked not just through the occupation of Germany, but also their dire economic situation, their interdependent recoveries, and the polarising effect of mounting tensions between the United States and the Soviet Union. An account is required of postwar reconstruction in these three nations which tackles the striking connection between and convergence of the refashioned postwar cultures of Britain, France and West Germany that emerged from this entwined postwar history.

Within the space of a few crucial postwar years, there was a dramatic shift from a very destructive enmity between Western European nations to a tangible unity. How former adversaries in war came to share a Western European cultural identity in the years after 1945 is a complex and multi-faceted phenomenon. The contention explored here is that urban reconstruction and city space, aided by the medium of photography, was one crucial facet of this postwar moment; a moment defined by a changing landscape of international politics, as well as burgeoning transnational debate and cultural exchange. This radical shift from enmity to unity is exemplified by the rejection of the wartime Morgenthau Plan (1944; officially rescinded in 1947) which conceived of the industrial disassembly of Germany, and the reorientation from the Monnet Plan (1947) which assumed international control of German coal and steel production, to the pursuit of the Schumann Plan (1950), which laid out principles for the creation of a union of European nations, and lead to the Treaty of Rome (1957) and the

⁶ Richard Overy outlines the death toll for all three countries. Noting the difficulties of making precise estimates and drawing on a range of sources he estimates 700,000 people were killed in Western Europe by bombing between 1940 and 1945 (Richard Overy, 'Introduction', in *Bombing, States and Peoples in Western Europe, 1940-1945*, ed. by Claudia Baldoli, Richard Overy and Andrew Knapp (London: Continuum, 2011), pp. 1–20 (pp. 1 & 18)).

establishment of the European Economic Community (EEC) which held its first official meeting in 1958.⁷ The abandonment of punitive measures against Germany in favour of rebuilding an economically strong and politically democratic state reintegrated with other former Allied, Axis and occupied European nations was driven by two factors. The first was the pressing economic necessity to rehabilitate shattered states; an aim which required the industrial and commercial clout of Germany to grow production and trade. The second was the increasingly dominant influence on international politics of the Cold War which forged new alliances under pressure of anxiety and animosities between east and west rekindled following achievement of the goal that had cemented wartime Allied relations – the defeat of fascism. An important consequence of this shift from destructive conflict to constructive cooperation was that urban reconstruction in Western Europe after 1945 was implicated in the project of constructing a particular postwar idea of ‘Europe’, alongside the creation of the new institutions that were to embody and promote this idea.⁸

City space was crucially significant in the postwar moment not just because of the material conditions urban inhabitants had to endure, but also because of the symbolic importance of the city. Towns and cities are both the site of everyday life for large parts of a population and emblems of collective identity. City space thus had a cultural as well as a material dimension in the postwar moment: its reconstruction encompassed not just the living conditions of urban dwellers, but the broader psychological recovery of populations from total war. Consequently, culture and the representations that constitute it (be it through radio, literature, the press or any other means of mass communication) played a central role in national projects of postwar reconciliation and reconstruction. Moreover, arguably image-making technology was particularly central to the task of recording, representing and reimagining the cities of

⁷ The original six members of the EEC were Belgium, France, West Germany, Italy, Luxembourg and the Netherlands. Britain did not attain membership of the EEC until 1973. The first unsuccessful application for membership was made by the UK in 1960.

⁸ Judt argues that, ‘the idea of “Europe” was refurbished as a substitute for the kinds of national identification which had caused such wounds in the recent past’ (Tony Judt, ‘The Past Is Another Country: Myth and Memory in Postwar Europe’, *Daedalus*, 121 (1992), 83–118 (p. 97)). Such refurbishment meant negotiating the interwar and wartime intellectual heritage of the idea of Europe since ‘the fascist right [...] had made much play with the idea in that time, contrasting a New European Order with the anarchic and febrile democracies of the liberal era’ (Judt, 83–118 (p. 97)). In the postwar period, rather than *dominion* of one nation over others (Hitler’s vision of Europe amalgamating Roman pretensions and contemporary notions of empire for which he envisaged a monumental new capital city, Germania, in lieu of Berlin), the idea of Europe was framed as the *union* of nations.

European nations in the postwar moment.⁹ Visual material had been a vital element in wartime propaganda and, although total war ended, this central role of urban imagery continued in the postwar debate about reconstruction. The very visible challenge posed by war-damaged urban centres had been the sustaining force for visions of what the postwar world would look like, many of which had been in public circulation since the early 1940s. In the postwar moment, published widely in books, magazines, journals and official publications, the photography of destruction and reconstruction remained a key means through which the symbolism of the city was mobilised, directed and contested. The medium thus played an instrumental role in determining the course reconstruction took by presenting specific perspectives on the problems and their solutions. While ruin photographs capturing the state of Europe's towns and cities promoted particular attitudes to this destruction, for instance, architectural photographs advocated a vision of the future that could be built in these ruined urban spaces. And, as the intensifying Cold War divided Germany, Europe and the world along ideological lines, it also brought together nations under the aegis of one side or the other, helping imbue a transnational idealism in some of these visions of a postwar future. In short, influencing perspectives on reconstruction and the postwar world, images could be every bit as formative an influence on the processes of reconstruction as individuals, ideas or inventions.

Lying between the celebrations of VE Day and the self-expression that epitomised the 1960s, the difficult period of recovery for Europe's cities and citizens encompassed a set of key cultural shifts. In Western Europe, against the backdrop of the Cold War and decolonisation, aspects of daily routines, particular lifestyles and the material objects of everyday spaces underwent important changes. For instance, consumer goods gained a new prominence and the nature of work (salaried and domestic) changed with the technological advances and new opportunities ushered in as austerity segued into prosperity. Integral to such changes was an increasing level of

⁹ Novelist and curator André Chamson, at the tenth *Rencontres Internationales de Genève* in September 1955, spoke of 'a passionate public demand for images' ('l'intérêt passionné du public pour l'image'). Although addressing the impact of photography on intellectual life since its invention a century earlier – not just within the discourses of reconstruction – Chamson was struck by the postwar thirst for imagery, describing it as a hallmark of the age and, in hyperbolic fashion, even as a tidal wave engulfing humanity: 'Une des marques de notre époque, c'est cette sorte de raz de marée qui déferle sur l'humanité' (André Chamson, 'Langage et images', in *La Culture est-elle en péril? Débat sur ses moyens de diffusion: presse, cinéma, radio, télévision*, Rencontres internationales de Genève, 10 (Neuchâtel: Éditions de la Baconnière, 1955), pp. 79–102 (p. 83)).

transnational cultural exchange, including the circulation across national borders of photographs. This study will consider images of urban space which traversed the various local, national and transnational public spheres. It will demonstrate that urban photography of the period was an essential facet of these cultural shifts which accompanied the process of reconstruction. Of course, when it comes to questions of architecture and the city, cultural exchange between nations is not a peculiarly postwar phenomenon. The neo-classical tradition in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries is but one example, consisting of a complex web of relations which connects Ancient Greece, Renaissance Italy, the First French Republic, Victorian Britain, Nazi Germany and a host of other nations and their cities. But within the context of the postwar refashioning of the idea of Europe, the image of the city played a vital part as a means of symbolic negotiation between local, national and transnational communities. What is striking about the situation in postwar Western Europe is the speed of the simultaneous transition from conflict to co-operation, and the breadth of the cultural exchange which encompassed the debates of architects and planners, as well as the images of celebrities in the photographic press and the publications of national governments and international institutions. The city was thus central to the cultural Cold War; to both national self-representations and transnational cultural relations. The image of the city was mobilised to meet the challenges of the psychological task of national reconstruction following the unprecedented involvement of urban centres and civilians in the Second World War and, in the absence of armed conflict between the two ideologically opposed blocs, the competing representations and meanings of urban space and urban life were part of a vicarious battle, working to form bonds between some nations and entrench divisions between (even within) others.¹⁰

¹⁰ It is perhaps worth briefly expanding on the conception of 'culture' underpinning this characterisation of cultural change and exchange. In his benchmark definition, Raymond Williams suggested 'culture' had come to mean both 'a particular way of life [...] of a people, a period, a group or humanity in general' and 'the works and practices of intellectual [...] and artistic activity'. Absent from Williams' definition, but integral to the conception of culture employed here, are the objects and practices of mass, popular or consumer culture. From detergent to photographic magazines, these material aspects of everyday life and the social relations they facilitate are crucial to the constitution of particular shared ways of life. They are 'works and practices' neither uniquely intellectual nor artistic, but generated by commercial activity. Thus culture in the postwar moment is considered here to include not just 'music, literature, painting and sculpture, theatre and film' (as Williams adumbrated), but also architecture, journalism, industrial design, and any number of consumer goods and circulated representations, like photography. This broader definition is the result of that 'complex and still active history of the word' Williams acknowledged over three decades ago, when he noted 'the steadily extending social and anthropological use of [the terms] culture and cultural' (Raymond Williams, *Keywords: A Vocabulary of Culture and Society* (London: Flamingo, 1983), pp. 90 & 92).

Since conceptions of the postwar world simultaneously entailed complex stances towards local histories, national identity and transnational collectivities, postwar cultural histories of Western Europe demand both a comparative and transnational perspective to ascertain how the assertion or renegotiation of particular regional and national identities took place alongside the reshaping of the idea of Europe and the reconfiguration of European-ness. A comparative approach facilitates the identification of meaningful similarities and differences which give regional and national cultures and collective identities their particular character or content; while a transnational approach allows the tracing of cultural connections, exchanges and appropriations which shape or bolster both national and transnational identities. Conflict is always simultaneously a local and a transnational phenomenon, encompassing the actions of nation states and affecting the lives of individuals in specific locations. Likewise, the image of the city is simultaneously locally and transnationally significant, regional and national significances interacting to shape the specific importance of the image of the city in the postwar moment. The three comparator countries of Britain, France and West Germany, are an illuminating prism through which to view this national / European cultural dynamic in the postwar world – that is, the complex relationships between national self-representations and assertions of transnational unity or identity.

Hence, this study examines the massive postwar project of urban reconstruction and the impact on it of transnational cultural exchange across Western Europe in a cultural climate defined by both a dramatic shift from enmity to unity as exemplified by the three comparator nations and by a broader polarisation of nations resulting from international political tension. Ultimately, the study will conclude that architecture and photography were crucial facets in the national cultures of, and transnational cultural exchange between, the three comparator nations in the first postwar decade. Within the network of intersecting and interactive local, national and transnational cultures, the image of the city facilitated both a negotiation of past conflict and a vision of future cooperation. The task addressed in this study, therefore, is that of explicating the central and interconnected roles of architecture and photography in postwar cultural exchange between the three nations, and thereby making a contribution to the broader historiographical challenge of accounting for the emergence of a prominent transnational Western European cultural identity within fewer than fifteen years of the end of the Second World War. The images to be analysed are drawn from four different fields, all in the public domain. These are: ruin photography in

commemorative books in the years immediately following the war; architectural photography and the representation of mass housing projects from the end of the 1940s into the mid-1950s; photography of urban space in popular photographic magazines, again from the late 1940s to the mid-1950s; and the use of photography in the early campaign work of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO), from the late 1940s until the opening of its purpose-built Parisian headquarters in 1958. Where particularly instructive, analysis will make comparisons with the photography of destruction and reconstruction in East Germany.

The following broad questions will be addressed: What were the principal representational strategies relevant to depictions of the urban environment in photography of the period? How did the circulation of photographs within the public sphere work to re-imagine urban space and influence postwar attitudes to reconstruction? What differences are identifiable in the photographic discourses of the three comparator countries and what significance did these have? Moreover, what similarities are evident, and what is the relevance of such shared discourse to transnational conceptions of the postwar city? And, finally, what conclusions can be drawn regarding the representational strategies in urban photography and questions of cultural memory, utopian thinking and collective identity?

In tackling these questions in relation to urban photography through a comparative study of these three Western European nations between 1945 and 1958, two important contributions to an understanding of the period and the medium will emerge. The first is an interdisciplinary method for tackling the cultural history of photography which represents an alternative to the recycling of iconic images as mere illustration in social, political and economic histories. Drawing on theoretical insights from the field of photography studies and approaches from cultural history, this method balances an appreciation of the particular cultures in which photographic representations circulate with detailed analyses of specific publications, to illuminate the significance and function of photography in a given historical period. The second contribution is a detailed account of the ways in which urban photography played a part in remaking the various local, national and transnational cultures in the postwar moment – a key period in an ongoing age of globalisation, extending from the twentieth into the twenty-first century, which David Armitage has described as that ‘gradual thickening of connections across national boundaries, their increasing penetration into

previously untouched localities, and the emergence of a common set of concerns that define a universal cosmopolitan community'.¹¹

The following sections of this introductory chapter will review the key historiographical and methodological concerns which underpin this study. The first section reviews recent historiography of the period of postwar reconstruction in Western Europe, drawing out important topics and themes relevant to this study. It also explains the rationale behind the selection of the three nations and the temporal framework within which they are compared. The second section will highlight key insights from the field of photography studies and relevant questions posed by the field of cultural history which contribute to the methodology pursued here. In particular, it will outline the relevant concepts of photographic discourse, visibility, the agency of the photograph and iconoclasm. The third section will address essential interdisciplinary concerns relevant to the case studies, including questions of collective identity or imagined communities, cultural memory and amnesia, and utopian thinking. The final section explains in greater detail the selection of primary material, the interpretation which it is subject to and the nature of the historical claims this operation facilitates.

¹¹ David Armitage, 'Is There a Pre-History of Globalization?', in *Comparison and History: Europe in Cross-National Perspective*, ed. by Deborah Cohen and Maura O'Connor (Abingdon: Routledge, 2004), pp. 165–176 (p. 165).

1.1 *Historiography of Postwar Reconstruction in Western Europe*

This comparative study will reveal the peculiarly central role of vision, propagated and promoted by photography, to the postwar reconstruction of Western Europe, as well as the manner in which the first postwar years entailed the establishment of important precedents paving the way for our own image-saturated culture of the twenty-first century. Only by considering photography as a key means of representation (both one of the most disposable and one of the most mobile forms of representation, capable of crossing national boundaries) is it possible to understand the significance of urban space (one of the least transient or mobile symbolic forms) in the postwar moment. Moreover, only by considering the symbolic position of urban space in postwar Western Europe is it possible to grasp, notwithstanding their markedly different wartime experiences, the processes of reconciliation and recovery that constituted the postwar reconstruction of Britain, France and West Germany. Two distinct phases can be identified in historical writing on postwar European reconstruction. It is necessary to outline and compare these phases in order to articulate the important deficiencies in the historiography of postwar reconstruction which this study will address.¹²

Scholarship regarding the history of European reconstruction following the Second World War, as Mark Mazower has noted, has its own history relating to events which the end of that conflict set in motion. Around the time of the fall of the Berlin Wall and the end of the Cold War, a concerted effort was made to analyse what had occurred after 1945:

It was not just the Cold War that had come to an end but the whole phase of history that had begun with the division of Europe in 1945. Tracing the origins of this post-war order now became conceivable as a historical problem and the question of reconstruction assumed a new significance.¹³

¹² The term 'historiography' is employed here to refer to the published work of historians, not the philosophy or theory of history. The following section will address theoretical questions relevant to the task of writing the cultural history of photography.

¹³ Mark Mazower, 'Reconstruction: The Historiographical Issues', *Past & Present*, 210 (2011), 17–28 (p. 18).

In the decade from the late 1980s, the historical problem was primarily conceived in economic and political terms, with particular attention focused on the European Recovery Programme (the \$12.6 billion of aid from the United States, known as the Marshall Plan). This first phase of reconstruction historiography sought to provide a detailed characterisation of and account for the various, seemingly miraculous, recoveries of Europe's war-devastated nations – what became known in France as *les trentes glorieuses*, associated in Britain with Harold Macmillan's avowal that Britons had 'never had it so good', and termed the *Wirtschaftswunder* in relation to West Germany. For instance, Alan S. Milward's *The Reconstruction of Western Europe, 1945-51* (1984) was explicitly a history from above which considered the macroeconomic level, comparing 17 countries and asking why the postwar reconstruction of 1945, with its subsequent economic boom, was so much more successful than that of 1918.¹⁴ While David W. Ellwood's *Rebuilding Europe: Western Europe, America and Postwar Reconstruction* (1992) presented a synthesis of political and economic narratives to argue that, in the period 1945-55, a shared belief in and pursuit of economic growth promised to 'cancel out the memories of the continent's dreadful twentieth century civil war and even end the class war'.¹⁵

Economic and political narratives provided the framework in which much reconstruction scholarship developed in its first phase.¹⁶ The key issues in this debate were, unsurprisingly, the economic policies underpinning European cooperation and integration, and the relation between the influence of the United States, on the one hand, and the various socialist postwar governments on the other. A point of contention was the significance of the nation state. During the war, Axis countries had demonstrated the catastrophic results of nationalist fervour while Allied countries had shown the potential achievements of nations bound by a shared sense of purpose. Was the postwar integration of Europe best understood as a response to the former or the latter? Moreover, did the progress of European cooperation and the mounting influence of the United States mean the erosion of national sovereignty in Europe, or the creation of a framework of peace and security in which sovereignty could continue

¹⁴ Alan S. Milward, *The Reconstruction of Western Europe, 1945-51* (London: Methuen, 1984).

¹⁵ David W. Ellwood, *Rebuilding Europe: Western Europe, America and Postwar Reconstruction* (Harlow: Longman, 1992), p. 2.

¹⁶ Studies of postwar Britain in this vein, for instance, include: Michael J. Hogan, *The Marshall Plan: America, Britain, and the Reconstruction of Western Europe, 1947-1952* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987); Peter Burnham, *The Political Economy of Postwar Reconstruction* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1990).

to be exercised? These economic and political histories of postwar reconstruction demonstrated that the postwar period was not simply a time of socialist consensus in and between Western European nations which saw the establishment of various forms of welfare state (contrasting starkly with the interwar relation of the state to the individual and representing a broad convergence of democratic models of government still recognisable today). It was also a period marked by a concerted effort to remove barriers to international trade and capitalism (promoting the individual consumerism central to the economic boom and its longevity).¹⁷

Additionally, this first phase of reconstruction historiography illustrated that closer cooperation of Western European nations and the postwar establishment of Western European institutions was a complex and uncertain process. Economic and political histories of postwar reconstruction in Europe overlapped with and were complemented by economic and political histories of the construction of Europe. Such histories considered the idea of European unification during the Second World War, assessed the forms of economic and political cooperation in Europe, and tackled the role of decision-makers and elites in national efforts to construct transnational European institutions.¹⁸ From the Council of Europe (1948), to the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (1949), the European Coal and Steel Community (1950) and the European Economic Community (1957), the political, economic and military delineation of Western Europe was neither inevitable nor unidirectional. Rather, the formation of Europe was a negotiation between and an amalgam of both US-sponsored initiatives influenced by the Cold War political climate, and various agendas promoted by European governments, informed by a continuity of prewar thought and individual involvement (such as that of Jean Monnet).

¹⁷ This tension in Europe (highlighted by the first phase of historical writing on postwar reconstruction) between, on the one hand, the establishment or strengthening of social democracies and, on the other, the removing of economic barriers to capitalism, was a thread running through the history of the twentieth century. As Mazower noted in 1998, 'The real victor in 1989 was not democracy but capitalism, and Europe as a whole now faces the task which western Europe has confronted since the 1930s, of establishing a workable relationship between the two' (Mark Mazower, *Dark Continent: Europe's Twentieth Century* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1998), p. 405). Following the economic crash of 2008, it is painfully evident that this remains an incomplete task for both national governments and transnational institutions.

¹⁸ Examples of this research, the titles of which make explicit the overlap between historical writing on postwar reconstruction and on the construction of Europe include: *Making the New Europe: European Unity and the Second World War*, ed. by M. L. Smith and Peter M. R. Stirk (London: Pinter, 1990); *Shaping Postwar Europe: European Unity and Disunity, 1945-1957*, ed. by Peter M. R. Stirk and David Willis (London: Pinter, 1991); *Building Postwar Europe: National Decision-Makers and European Institutions, 1948-63*, ed. by Anne Deighton (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1995).

In this first phase of the historiography of postwar reconstruction, alongside research which sought a Western European overview and grappled with the question of the nation state in postwar Europe, there also emerged nation-specific studies by architectural or urban historians. These historical accounts looked at the people and policies in the fields of architecture and town planning relevant to the practical challenge of reconstructing war-devastated towns and cities.¹⁹ They examined the specific situations in the three comparator nations, tracing continuities in and highlighting distinctions between interwar, wartime and postwar periods. They also examined the relation between professionals and politicians, and delineated the architectural cultures (encompassing professional journals, associations and colloquia) in postwar Britain, France and West Germany. As with the economic and political histories, the architectural and urban histories of the first phase of postwar reconstruction historiography also undertook comparative analyses between nations.²⁰

The focus on questions of nation, economy and policy, or architects, planners and politicians, which characterised the first phase of postwar reconstruction historiography, contrasts with that of the second phase. Considering the broader significance of reconstruction as 'simultaneously a political, social, ethical, and psychological challenge', the second phase has focused principally on questions of national identity and collective memory.²¹ Representations and their importance in the social, economic and political changes of the postwar period are central to the historiography of the research conducted in the 2000s. The conception of the historical

¹⁹ Publications on Britain, France and Germany include: Junichi Hasegawa, *Replanning the Blitzed City Centre: A Comparative Study of Bristol, Coventry, and Southampton, 1941-1950* (London: Open University Press, 1992); *Moments of Modernity: Reconstructing Britain, 1945-1964*, ed. by Becky Conekin, Frank Mort and Chris Waters (London: Rivers Oram, 1999); Nicholas Bullock, *Building the Post-War World: Modern Architecture and Reconstruction in Britain* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2002); Anatole Kopp, Frédérique Boucher and Danièle Pauly, *L'Architecture de la reconstruction en France, 1945-1953* (Paris: Éditions du Moniteur, 1982); Danièle Voldman, *La Reconstruction des villes françaises de 1940 à 1954: Histoire d'une politique* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 1997); Werner Durth and Niels Gutschow, *Träume in Trümmern: Planungen zum Wiederaufbau zerstörter Städte im Westen Deutschlands, 1940-1950*, 2 vols. (Braunschweig: Friedrich Vieweg, 1988); Jeffry M. Diefendorf, *In the Wake of War: The Reconstruction of German Cities After World War II* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993).

²⁰ Comparative volumes of essays include: *Rebuilding Europe's Bombed Cities*, ed. by Jeffry M. Diefendorf (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1990); *Villes reconstruites: du dessin au destin*, ed. by Patrick Dieudonné, 2 vols. (Paris: L'Harmattan, 1994); 'Reconstruction of Europe After World War II', Special issue of *Rassegna*, ed. by Carlo Olmo, 15 (1993); *Les Reconstructions en Europe, 1945-1949*, ed. by Dominique Barjot, Rémi Baudouï and Danièle Voldman (Brussels: Éditions Complexe, 1997); *Urban Reconstruction in Britain and Japan, 1945-1955: Dreams, Plans and Realities*, ed. by Nick Tiratsoo (Luton: University of Luton Press, 2002).

²¹ Mazower, 17-28 (p. 25).

problem of reconstruction in this latter phase has been articulated by Monica Riera and Gavin Schaffer in the introduction to *The Lasting War: Society and Identity in Britain, France and Germany after 1945* (2008): 'How did post-war individual and collective identities crystallise? And to what extent were they shaped by (and shape) the memory of the catastrophe of the Second World War?'²² Reflection structured around these concerns of memory and identity has produced detailed analyses of postwar reconstruction in Europe considered as problems of the war's aftermath and legacy, rather than just the material task of reconstruction, with its related governmental policies, economic bodies and urban histories.²³ Shifting from a preoccupation with economic and political concerns to social and cultural terms, this second phase is marked by a consideration of, for instance, the postwar purge (*l'épuration*) following the end of the Vichy regime in France or the question of coming to terms with the past (*Vergangenheitsbewältigung*) following the German capitulation.

If the central problem of the first phase of postwar reconstruction historiography was the 'nation', then the central problem of the second phase is the 'period'. It is not simply a question of when reconstruction started and ended, but of the relationship between individuals in the postwar moment, and their past and future. Recent research has addressed the various self-conscious ways in which the postwar period was described as a watershed moment at the time – be it the New Elizabethan Age in Britain, the zero hour (*Stunde Null*) in Germany or a French renaissance. In the first postwar years, public debates in the three comparator countries sought to articulate a future radically different from the past with its two world wars, punctuated by the depression. This is not to say that the nation is no longer considered relevant in

²² Monica Riera and Gavin Schaffer, 'Introduction', in *The Lasting War: Society and Identity in Britain, France and Germany After 1945*, ed. by Monica Riera and Gavin Schaffer (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), p. 6.

²³ These include: *West Germany Under Construction: Politics, Society, and Culture in the Adenauer Era*, ed. by Robert G. Moeller (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1997); *The Politics of Retribution in Europe: World War II and Its Aftermath*, ed. by István Deák, Jan Tomasz Gross and Tony Judt (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000); Pieter Lagrou, *The Legacy of Nazi Occupation: Patriotic Memory and National Recovery in Western Europe, 1945-1965* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000); *Life After Death: Approaches to a Cultural and Social History of Europe During the 1940s and 1950s*, ed. by Richard Bessel and Dirk Schumann (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003); *Between Mass Death and Individual Loss: The Place of the Dead in Twentieth-Century Germany*, ed. by Alon Confino, Paul Betts and Dirk Schumann (Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2008); *Histories of the Aftermath: The Legacies of the Second World War in Europe*, ed. by Frank Biess and Robert G. Moeller (Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2010); 'Relief in the Aftermath of War', Special issue of *Journal of Contemporary History*, ed. by Jessica Reinisch, 43 (2008), 371–404; *Post-war Reconstruction in Europe: International Perspectives, 1945-1949*, ed. by Mark Mazower, Jessica Reinisch and David Feldman, Past and Present Supplements, 6 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011).

histories of postwar reconstruction written around and after the turn of the millennium. The nation as a historical problem is reconfigured, not jettisoned. Milward considered the *role* of the nation state in the postwar reconstruction, for instance. Tara Zahra, by contrast, has considered the *meaning or significance* of the nation, nationalism and internationalism as determining factors in the postwar treatment of refugee and displaced children.²⁴ Thus, the complex ways in which collective memories and national identities engaged with history, both recent and distant, have been factored into historical accounts of postwar reconstruction. Such accounts tackle what Reinhart Koselleck termed the 'presence of the past' and the 'future made present'.²⁵

The broader understanding of the challenge posed by postwar reconstruction which has shaped this second phase of historical writing is reflected in recent urban and architectural historical writing. Samuel Moyn, writing on Holocaust historiography as opposed to that of postwar reconstruction, considers the significance of the terms 'extermination camp' and 'concentration camp'. He has asserted that these different concepts and their uses 'have to be investigated in their life as ideas [...] not just as the real things they were, but also as synecdoches that may reveal a lot about how people mentally and ethically organize their worlds'.²⁶ It is in this manner that much of the scholarship of the postwar built environment of the last decade has proceeded. It has considered the way in which architecture and urban space had a life as ideas in the broader culture of reconstruction in postwar Western Europe – a social and cultural importance derived from the significance they were held to possess at the time. In the postwar moment, this social and cultural importance was defined by both the 'presence of the past' and the 'future in the present'. Buildings facilitated an engagement with the past and represented the possibilities of the future. In war-damaged towns and cities, they were integral to collective memories and national identities. Notably, historical writing on memory, identity and the built environment has largely focused on German towns and cities in particular, owing to the radical shifts of political organisation the country witnessed over the twentieth century and the fascinating question of how these

²⁴ 'Children were central objects of population politics, national building projects, and new forms of humanitarian intervention in the twentieth century as they represented the biological and political future of national communities' (Tara Zahra, *The Lost Children: Reconstructing Europe's Families After World War II* (Cambridge, MA.: Harvard University Press, 2011), p. 20).

²⁵ Reinhart Koselleck, *Futures Past: On the Semantics of Historical Time* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2004), pp. 260 & 259.

²⁶ Samuel Moyn, 'In the Aftermath of Camps', in *Histories of the Aftermath: The Legacies of the Second World War in Europe*, ed. by Frank Biess and Robert G. Moeller (Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2010), pp. 49–64 (p. 50).

shifts were reflected in the construction, destruction and reconstruction of urban space.²⁷

It is important to note that the schema of postwar reconstruction historiography sketched here is of two distinct but interconnected phases. The questions of memory and identity which have dominated the second phase were considered in the first. For instance, in his synthesis of economic and political accounts, Ellwood considered how the idea of economic growth could 'cancel out the memories' of conflict.²⁸ Similarly, Nicholas Hewitt edited a volume of essays published the year the Berlin Wall fell, titled *The Culture of Reconstruction: European Literature Thought and Film, 1945-50* (1989).²⁹ Questions of politics and economics are likewise indispensable in more recent scholarship. Dominik Geppert's edited volume of essays, *The Postwar Challenge: Cultural Social and Political Change in Western Europe, 1945-1958* (2003), synthesises important concerns and insights from both phases.³⁰ It provides national studies in a transnational perspective, tackling questions of national sovereignty and the construction of Europe, alongside memorial practices and American cultural influences. The first and second phases of the effort to write the history of postwar reconstruction in Western Europe are best viewed as a shift in emphasis, rather than a binary opposition or replacement of one paradigm by another. Nonetheless, this schema is essential in outlining the conception of the challenge of postwar reconstruction which underpins this study. It is that of the second phase: reconstruction as a broad social and cultural project of recovery and readjustment in which questions of memory and identity are paramount. Moreover, the contrast between the two phases of this schema helps highlight a deficiency of recent postwar reconstruction historiography which this study will address.

²⁷ See especially: Brian Ladd, *The Ghosts of Berlin: Confronting German History in the Urban Landscape* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1997); Gavriel David Rosenfeld, *Munich and Memory: Architecture, Monuments, and the Legacy of the Third Reich* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000); Neil Gregor, *Haunted City: Nuremberg and the Nazi Past* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008); *Beyond Berlin: Twelve German Cities Confront the Nazi Past*, ed. by Gavriel David Rosenfeld and Paul B. Jaskot (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2008).

²⁸ Ellwood, p. 2.

²⁹ *The Culture of Reconstruction: European Literature, Thought and Film, 1945-50*, ed. by Nicholas Hewitt (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1989).

³⁰ *The Postwar Challenge: Cultural, Social, and Political Change in Western Europe, 1945-1958*, ed. by Dominik Geppert (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003).

Contributions in the second phase of postwar reconstruction historiography have largely focused on one specific nation. These multiple narratives of memory and identity have analysed European countries from all points of the compass in a manner not reflected in earlier historical writing on reconstruction, which more frequently sought to give an overview. The first phase tackled, as Mazower characterised it, 'the reconfiguration of internationalism out of the war effort against Nazism'.³¹ Mazower, who has written about the continuities and contradictions which mark the dissolution of the League of Nations and the creation of the United Nations, has highlighted internationalism as an important idea and goal in the bi-polar world of the Cold War after 1945. However, in its insistence on distinguishing individual national (or even local) histories, recent historical writing risks ignoring strands of coherence and convergence between Western European nations in the period of postwar reconstruction. That is, they do not begin to account for the emergence of postwar Europe as *Europe*; a meaningful collective and a symbolic space which was (pre-1945) fought over and (post-1945) fought for. The contributions of this second phase – published so far chiefly as essays in collected volumes or journals – have taken the form of a broad mosaic of essential (but largely atomised or unsynthesised) national histories. Thus, they fail to achieve what Frank Biess terms transnational and comparative histories which 'might bring into focus the convergence of individual and social experiences of the war and its aftermath that cut across national boundaries'.³²

This deficiency is surprising. As noted, representations are amongst the chief objects of study in postwar reconstruction historiography of the last decade. One of the frequently noted aspects of postwar culture in Western Europe – the very representations under scrutiny – is the manner in which culture became markedly less class- and less nation-specific. As Hewitt described it:

The period 1945-1960 sees the definitive shift in connotation of the term 'popular culture' from 'working-class' or 'labour' culture to the culture of mass consumption. In this, the crucial factor is the cultural dominance of the mass media [...]. In the period 1945-1960, therefore, the meaning of 'popular' culture undergoes a profound shift of meaning and begins to

³¹ Mazower, 17–28 (p. 20).

³² Frank Biess, 'Introduction: Histories of the Aftermath', in *Histories of the Aftermath: The Legacies of the Second World War in Europe*, ed. by Frank Biess and Robert G. Moeller (Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2010), pp. 1–10 (p. 4).

denote a particular kind of cultural production and consumption, rather than the culture of a particular community or constituency.³³

The postwar period saw a radical transformation of cultural production and consumption, coinciding with the reconfiguring of internationalism. Focusing on the situation in one nation (notwithstanding the fact that any is sufficiently complex to merit such an approach) risks missing a central facet of the social and cultural history of postwar reconstruction; namely, the manner in which the production, circulation and consumption of representations was central to the interactivity and convergence of cultures in postwar Western Europe.³⁴

Cinema has been one mode of cultural production and consumption prominent in recent social and cultural histories of postwar reconstruction. For instance, in the recent volume of essays, *Histories of the Aftermath* (2010), one of five sections was devoted entirely to cinema, the introduction proclaiming, 'Never before or after did movies assume such a central status for the production of meaning as during the first two postwar decades'.³⁵ Memorials are another set of cultural artefacts that have received attention in the second phase of postwar reconstruction historiography. It is perhaps no coincidence, given the preoccupation with memory and identity, that both films and monuments are objects of collective consumption or spectatorship. In contrast, objects of individual consumption, such as consumer goods, broadcast media and ephemera, have received less scholarly attention. A number of recent notable exceptions, focusing chiefly on West Germany, have investigated radio, journalism, magazines and industrial design.³⁶ The publication of these monographs serves to

³³ Nicholas Hewitt, 'Introduction: Popular Culture and Mass Culture', *Contemporary European History*, 8 (1999), 351–358 (pp. 355–6).

³⁴ Convergence with the culture of the United States is also, of course, a vitally important topic. This is an area of research in which a transnational perspective has been more frequently pursued, looking at the growing success of cultural products like Coca-Cola and practices like cinema attendance.

³⁵ Biess, pp. 1–10 (p. 6).

³⁶ These notable exceptions include: Jessica C. E. Gienow-Hecht, *Transmission Impossible: American Journalism as Cultural Diplomacy in Postwar Germany, 1945-1955* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1999); Susan Weiner, *Enfants Terribles: Youth and Femininity in the Mass Media in France, 1945-1968* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2001); Paul Betts, *The Authority of Everyday Objects: A Cultural History of West German Industrial Design* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004); Alexander Badenoch, *Voices in Ruins: West German Radio Across the 1945 Divide* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008); Cora Sol Goldstein, *Capturing the German Eye: American Visual Propaganda in Occupied Germany* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009).

highlight the wider omission of research on similar cultural products relevant to postwar consumerism. Photography is an important element of this type of cultural artefact, the absence of which is striking in the historiography of postwar reconstruction given Judt's observation with which this introduction began.³⁷ Photography, with its ease of mobility across national borders, also particularly merits a transnational historical perspective. The position of photography within the practice of cultural history will be considered in more detail in the following section. It will suffice to note here that the same applies to photography as Leora Auslander has written regarding the comparable absence of material culture in the writing of history: 'Each form of human expression has its unique attributes and capacities; limiting our evidentiary base [...] renders us unable to grasp important dimensions of human experience, and our explanations of major historical problems are thereby impoverished.'³⁸

But in addressing the transnational cultural history of postwar photography in the period of European reconstruction why single out these three nations for comparison in particular? Prior to the war, they were amongst the largest economies on the continent. Afterwards, they remained amongst the most prominent Western European nations in questions of international relations. However, more pertinent than such broadly drawn similarities are the different wartime experiences of the three comparator countries which render the cultural exchange and convergence of the postwar period all the more remarkable and requiring investigation. Differences also existed between the postwar political experience of the three nations – the occupation and division of Germany, the intimate involvement in the European project by France, and the initial arms-length stance taken by Britain before its unsuccessful application for EEC membership in 1960. Yet, notwithstanding such differences, the parallel urban reconstruction projects of these three pivotal war-damaged nations were the result of transnational and interactive architectural and visual cultures and can only be fully understood through comparative and transnational perspectives. All three nations underwent radical urban redevelopment as postwar reconstruction segued into continuous urban renewal. In Britain, 'more of the fabric of British towns and cities were destroyed in the 1960s than had been destroyed by the bombing in the whole of the

³⁷ The question of photography and the Holocaust, by contrast, has received a large amount of attention by both historians and scholars from other disciplinary fields.

³⁸ Leora Auslander, 'Beyond Words', *American Historical Review*, 110 (2005), 1015–1045 (p. 1015).

Second World War'.³⁹ Between 1954 and 1974, notwithstanding the minimal damage it sustained during wartime, 24% of Paris was rebuilt.⁴⁰ German urban centres, too, were the subject of continuous intervention and reinvention in the same period.⁴¹ And all three nations engaged in debate about and deliberation of each other's reconstruction efforts. A different set of comparator countries might highlight different facets of or priorities within the national / European cultural dynamic. But Britain, France and West Germany – owing to their central position in the war (as Allied nation, occupied nation and Axis nation) and the peace (as key US ally, European champion, and defeated and divided nation), as well as their common experience of postwar urban change – are the most productive choice for a comparative and transnational cultural history of the image of the postwar city in Western Europe.

Undoubtedly, as well as debating the merits of European community, the three comparator nations were also variously engaged in the creation of a new Atlantic community in contradistinction to that taking shape behind what Churchill in 1948 termed the 'Iron Curtain'. Nonetheless, the United States is largely absent from the account offered here. Of course, the connections between the United States and Western Europe are important to cultural histories of the period, as well as political and economic accounts. That relation is an intricate one; as Eric Hobsbawm wrote of the establishment of the EEC, 'like so many other things in post-1945 Europe [it was] created both by and against the USA'.⁴² Reference is made at points in what follows to that complex relation between European nations and the United States, but coverage here in no way aims to be comprehensive. In retrospect, it may be evident that the United States was an important force in shaping postwar European cities, be it through the Allied offensive, the Marshall Plan or the spread of American consumer products. Yet, it did not necessarily appear that way to someone steeped in the public debate of the postwar period. Reconstruction was the dominant concern in the first postwar decade; arguably the discussion of American influence in the field of architecture,

³⁹ Helen Meller, *Towns, Plans and Society in Modern Britain* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), p. 82.

⁴⁰ Norma Evenson, *Paris: A Century of Change, 1878-1978* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1979), pp. 309–310.

⁴¹ 'Sometime between 1955 and 1960 [...] consciousness of *reconstructing* bombed [West German] cities faded away and was replaced by a conceptualization of urban change as part of a broader and more general process of growth and modernization' (Diefendorf, *In the Wake of War*, p. xvii).

⁴² Eric Hobsbawm, *Age of Extremes: The Short Twentieth Century, 1914-1991* (London: Abacus, 1994), p. 240.

urban culture and social change (whether pro or anti-American in sentiment) was a more marginal concern at the time.

Postwar cultural exchange between or modes of cultural production involving the United States and Western European nations have been addressed by cultural historians scrutinising both architecture and visual culture.⁴³ As the best work in this field reveals, it was never simply a question of American influence on Europe, but also of how the United States responded postwar to the 'rediscovery' of Europe.⁴⁴ Cultural histories are required which address claims regarding both the Americanisation of Europe and the Europeanisation of the United States. This study, however, prioritises questions of the cultural Europeanisation of the three comparator nations; that is, the reconfiguration of Europe as a cultural entity and its articulation with postwar cultures and collective identities through the visual and architectural discourses of these three nations. Central to this is the relation of nations to one another and the cultural exchange between them. The role and presence of the United States in questions of urban reconstruction – though far from an irrelevance – is by necessity a secondary concern. Comparisons with the culture of reconstruction in the German Democratic Republic, by contrast, receives greater attention, since the visual and architectural discourses of Western and Eastern Europe although separated by the Iron Curtain were joined by a shared interwar history and the charged climate of the cultural Cold War. They were two sides in an ongoing conversation on the contested terrain of the image of the city – or in the case of Berlin, the contested terrain of the city itself.

In tackling these three nations, why address the period 1945 to 1958? National histories frequently offer specific or defined historical co-ordinates, identifying this date

⁴³ For example: Greg Castillo, *Cold War on the Home Front: The Soft Power of Midcentury Design* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2010); Goldstein.

⁴⁴ The dust jacket blurb of a postwar American photobook concerning European cultural war damage stated, 'Every one of these great structures stood as an intrinsic expression of some vital stepping stone in the mysterious unfolding of our civilization. In these very forms are concentrated the collective energies of a particular milieu, in them revealed its highest aspirations. To us they are the permanent image of great ideals and the sounding board of our own aspirations' (Henry Adams La Farge, *Lost Treasures of Europe* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1946)). For a detailed study which addresses social, political and cultural impact of the superpower in Europe, see Victoria de Grazia, *Irresistible Empire: America's Advance Through Twentieth-Century Europe* (Cambridge, MA.: Harvard University Press, 2005). However, Patricia Clavin has commented on the unidirectional thrust of this study: 'De Grazia's work helps Europeans pull off the canny trick of helping to ensure that the modern taste for rapacious production and consumption is identified with the USA, when it was certainly not just "made in the USA"' (Patricia Clavin, 'Time, Manner, Place: Writing Modern European History in Global, Transnational and International Contexts', *European History Quarterly*, 40 (2010), 624–640 (p. 633)).

or that event as the mark of a particular revolution, rupture or step-change. Such temporal markers do not present themselves as readily for histories tackling more than one nation since narratives of different national histories rarely synchronise. Identifying the end of the Second World War and the start of the postwar period in Western Europe is a case in point: The French capital was liberated in August 1944, but German capitulation did not come until May 1945 and rationing continued in Britain until 1954. Moreover, for cultural historians, military or political milestones are dubious markers since the object of study – ideas, discourses, representations – are often the subject of continuous evolution, seldom dramatic revolution. Architectural historian Jean-Louis Cohen, examining the reconstruction plans of Allied and Axis nations that circulated in wartime, thus contends that, ‘the post-war period began as early as 1942’⁴⁵ with the circulation of proposals that derived heightened significance from their projected implementation in a future time after conflict.

Notwithstanding such ambiguity, 1945 is an important temporal marker. Not because it represents a rupture or revolution in cultural terms; postwar urban reconstruction and postwar urban photography cannot be adequately characterised as distinct from its interwar precedents in terms of any novelty of form. Rather, as the principal point of departure for this study, the year 1945 serves to highlight that the focus here is not any putative aesthetic innovation in the fields of photography or architecture; it is the impact of the political climate and cultural exchange on the meaning and significance of urban space as mediated through its photographic representation. While the aesthetics and imagery of urban construction in the postwar period was not radically different from what preceded it, its meaning and significance was changed by the political and cultural context of being *postwar*, of coming in the moment after conflict. Indeed, just as 1945 underlines the importance of coming after the war, so too does the term ‘postwar’. In one sense, ‘postwar’ as a label for the period after 1945 is misleading in relation to the Britain, France and West Germany. These years were not free of conflict in Europe or beyond. Be it Greece, India or Korea, conflicts involved or concerned the three comparator countries, as did wider Cold War political tensions between east and west. Yet, ‘postwar’ remains an appropriate term because it captures the defining influence which the Second World War had on everyday life in the cities and towns of Britain, France and West Germany after 1945. The postwar moment was charged with meaning because of its status as coming after;

⁴⁵ Jean-Louis Cohen, *Architecture in Uniform: Designing and Building for the Second World War* (Montreal: Canadian Centre for Architecture, 2011), p. 383.

and that heightened importance of the period worked to reshape other meanings of the time, including the significance of architecture and urban space. Judt captured this impact in aptly visual terms: 'the long shadow of World War Two lay heavy across Europe'.⁴⁶

Regarding the terminal point of this study, a number of salient political and social changes offer compelling grounds in support of 1958. The Treaty of Rome, signed in April 1957, led to the establishment of the European Economic Community on 1 January 1958 – a symbolic culmination of the drastic shift from wartime enmity to a measure of postwar unity in Europe. In 1957, Konrad Adenauer's Christian Democratic Union party gained its first overall majority, representing the attainment of stability in the young West German democratic state. In 1957, Anthony Eden resigned as British Prime Minister following the Suez Crisis. The following year in France the Fifth Republic was established, precipitated by the situation in Algeria. Both developments represented, if clarification were needed, the waning importance in world affairs of France and Britain with decolonisation continuing and the spheres of influence of the United States and the Soviet Union expanding. In addition, Arthur Marwick argues that the late fifties were 'a critical point of change', witnessing the growing power of young people, a change in their behaviour and prominence, the shifting of family relations and of sexual mores which together suggest a tipping point c.1958 which marked the start of 'the long Sixties'.⁴⁷ Together such diverse phenomena suggest the closing of the first chapter in the European postwar period. Yet, these are complementary reasons as to why this study culminates in 1958. The principal reason is the important symbolism of UNESCO and the new headquarters of this international organisation which opened in Paris that year.

UNESCO, an international cultural organisation, owes its existence to the Second World War. Successor to the wartime Conference of Allied Ministers of Education which met from 1942 to plan for postwar reconstruction in the field of education, UNESCO was conceived as a direct response to the destructive impact of war on everyday life, cities and citizens. Explicitly a cultural organisation concerned with international relations and furthering the pursuit of peace, UNESCO promoted numerous initiatives – such as 'The Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural

⁴⁶ Judt, *Postwar*, p. 10.

⁴⁷ Arthur Marwick, *The Sixties: Cultural Revolution in Britain, France, Italy, and the United States, C.1958-c.1974* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), pp. 7–8.

Property in the Event of Armed Conflict' (1954) – which were inspired by the plight of civilians and urban centres during the war. Moreover, its purpose-built headquarters which were completed in 1958 are an instructive example of the postwar incarnation of the International Style. The modernist complex on Paris' Place de Fontenoy and its photographic image which circulated around the globe are symbolic of the critical importance of urban imagery to the meaning and significance of the European city during the period of postwar reconstruction in the aftermath of unprecedented urban destruction. Thus, while 1958 is no more the tidy conclusion of an era than 1945 was a 'year zero', it is between 1945 and 1958 that a raft of developments gain particular prominence and charged significance, making the period vital to an overarching rationale behind this study – the examination of the dynamic and interactive relation between national and transnational debates about the city during a moment in which the idea of Europe was being renegotiated and re-imagined. UNESCO and its purpose-built modernist headquarters represent a culmination of these developments which can be instructively examined through the visual culture of that organisation's early campaigns and public image.

In summary, this comparative study of urban photography from Britain, France and West Germany between 1945 and 1958 will address two principal deficiencies in the historiography of postwar reconstruction in Western Europe – both the general lack of a transnational perspective and the relative absence of photography considered as an artefact of everyday visual culture. The central argument is as follows: Architecture and photography were crucial facets in the national cultures of, and transnational cultural exchange between, the three comparator nations in the first postwar decade; and, within the network of intersecting local, national and transnational cultures, the image of the city was a key symbol which facilitated both a negotiation of past conflict and a vision of future cooperation. Drawing on nearly three decades of concerted research into postwar reconstruction, the central insights underpinning this study are: the charged meaning of reconstruction as an idea in the postwar period; the centrality of relations between nations in the Cold War context; and the changes in cultural production and consumption which constituted a virtual paradigm shift in cultural exchange. As adumbrated in the concluding chapter, tracing the intersecting cultural, urban and visual histories of these three particular nations during this specific moment in the immediate aftermath of the war furnishes important insights into questions of collective identity, cultural memory and utopian thinking which have much broader application for an understanding of the postwar urban reconstruction and its legacy.

1.2 *Cultural History and Photography Theory*

Addressing the deficiencies of postwar reconstruction historiography outlined in the previous section requires a theoretically-informed model of photography which draws on the fields of both cultural history and photography theory. From the inception of the medium to the most recognised images of the twenty-first century, photography has always been drawn to architecture and the spaces it creates. The oldest extant photograph, 'View from the Study Window at Gras', made in 1826 by Nicéphore Niépce, depicts the buildings around a Burgundy courtyard. Possibly the most photographed event in history – the terrorist attacks on New York in 2001 – saw the death of almost 3,000 people, but amongst the most widely-reproduced images which have become shorthand for that day are pictures of the World Trade Centre. This long-standing relationship between architecture and photography points to the first of two key issues underpinning the methodology for this research: the epistemological status of photographic representation or, in other words, *the relation between the photograph and the world*. The very name 'photography' points to the second. First used in English by John Herschel, it can be translated as 'light writing' and raises the problem of the ontological status of the photograph, or *the relation between the photograph and the word*. As the history of architecture and photography are thoroughly entwined, so are these two concerns. The question of whether photography provides reliable representations of the world remains a perennial bone of contention, only more insistent in the digital age. For some, the mechanical device which makes photography possible, the camera, argues for the trustworthiness of the image. For others, the involvement of the photographer always leaves the image open to charges of selection, partiality, or outright deceit. For others still, there are ineradicable ideological implications in the camera's mode of image-making. Tied up with this debate about the knowledge photography can or cannot impart, are numerous analogies between photographic image-making and other processes of representation or cultural production, be it the prized vision of the artist or the assumed rationality of the machine. Amongst these analogies, language and the word have frequently been used as tropes to explain the nature of photography. These debates about the relationship between photograph, world and word thread through the conceptual issues of photography theory and cultural history relevant to the methodology required for analysing postwar urban photography in Western Europe. To sketch out this

methodology, the following terms demand close reflection: discourse, visuality, mentalities, agency and iconoclasm.

The comparison between photography and language prevalent in critical reflection on photography in the late twentieth century provides the first major theoretical observation on which this study is founded. Namely, photographs do not exist in isolation, but rather in a set of dynamic relations with other images, words or ideas. These relations of the individual photograph to other elements in the cultural field determine its significance. For example, Herbert Mason's iconic image of St Paul's Cathedral during the Blitz (fig.1.1), originally published on the front page of the *Daily Mail* (fig. 1.2), bore the headline: 'War's Greatest Picture.' It was described as an image 'that all Britain will cherish – for it symbolises the steadiness of London's stand against the enemy: the firmness of Right against Wrong'.⁴⁸ The photograph portrays the building, excluding any human forms. The instantly recognisable dome of the cathedral stands in for the idea of London and its inhabitants. The caption offers a very specific interpretation of the photograph. St Paul's survival is taken to be proof of Londoners' 'steadiness' and 'firmness', and their resolve is taken to be inspiration for Britain as a whole. Thus, the photograph stands not as a record of destruction, but as an image of resilience. The photograph, the architectural icon and the rhetoric of journalism of the time work in concert, establishing dynamic relations between building (the world), headline (the word) and the image. It is through such relations that the meaning or significance of the photograph is generated. This characterisation of the photograph – its dependence on its cultural context for its significance – might best be summed up by the words Michel Foucault used in *The Archaeology of Knowledge* (1969) to describe the book: 'it is a node within a network'.⁴⁹

Victor Burgin provides a constructive description of the dynamic relations or *discourses* in which the historical analysis of photography must locate the individual image:

The intelligibility of the photograph is no simple thing; photographs are *texts* inscribed in terms of what we may call 'photographic discourse', but this discourse, like any other, engages discourses beyond itself, the 'photographic text', like any other, is the site of a complex

⁴⁸ 'War's Greatest Picture', *Daily Mail*, 31 December 1940, p. 1.

⁴⁹ Michel Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2002), pp. 25–6.

‘intertextuality’, an overlapping series of previous texts ‘taken for granted’ at a particular cultural and historical juncture.⁵⁰

Burgin highlights the manner in which such networks of reference cohere to form a set of rules which determine the production and reception of new representations within a given field. In other words, groups of photographs (such as passport photos, the work of nineteenth-century Pictorialist photographers, or paparazzi shots of celebrities reproduced across the internet) are not simply collections of images which share subject matter, aesthetic qualities, audiences, publishing platforms or other properties. They constitute modes of representation governed by conventions. The photographs in such groups – by implying what is deemed acceptable, valuable, interesting, or in some other way legitimate – influence the circulation of images and the images circulated. To understand the photograph, we need to grasp these conventions or networks of other words, images, ideas and material culture (like architecture) which, through the relations connecting them, determine its significance. These networks we might call *discursive formations* after Foucault. Crucially, these discursive formations are *productive*. They constitute a set of implicit rules which produce other images, but they also offer particular ways of thinking about that which is depicted – as Mason’s image exemplifies when located in the network of associations which constituted its original mode of circulation.

For the purposes of this study, the individual photograph is understood first and foremost as the site of intersection, comparison or contestation of a matrix of ideas, objects, representations and interpretations which inflect the significance of the image. These discursive formations give a photograph its significance. Yet this is ignored by the manner in which many histories of the second half of the twentieth century are illustrated by a jumbled selection of familiar images and scant captions in the centre pages. Mason’s image is one frequently repeated example, although it provides little ‘evidence’ about the Blitz, offering neither insight into individual experience, nor a gauge of the extent of destruction. Arguably, it is repeated because it is familiar and, for a British audience at least, conjures received wisdom about the Blitz which the historian seeks either to substantiate or repudiate. Photographs, in this way, appear as mere illustration – neither integrated with nor interrogated by the argument advanced. If photographs are tackled as ‘source material’ or ‘evidence,’ a standard approach is the

⁵⁰ Victor Burgin, ‘Looking at Photographs’, in *Thinking Photography*, ed. by Victor Burgin (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1982), p. 144.

error-correction model which seeks to contextualise the photograph and identify bias by considering issues such as the rhetoric employed, the function of the source, the interests potentially served and any other possible reasons for distortion. This is a positivist approach which considers the photograph as offering vital information about an historical moment by virtue of a privileged link between the image and the world. If the errors can be corrected by analysis, the photograph can offer a valuable window on the world of the past.

In *Eyewitnessing: The Uses of Images as Historical Evidence* (2001), Peter Burke advocated a 'cultural history' or 'historical anthropology of images', which entailed a consideration of 'the rules or conventions, conscious or unconscious, governing the perception and interpretation of images within a given culture'.⁵¹ This approach sounds comparable to the discursive analysis being envisaged here until Burke tackles a distinction between 'positivists' on the one hand and those he terms 'sceptics or structuralists' on the other. Considering both positions excessive, Burke proposed, 'a third way [...] concerned with degrees or modes of reliability and with reliability for different purposes'.⁵² However, it is not clear how this third way differs from the error-correction model. For a study such as this, the central problem of the error-correction model and Burke's third way is that, being concerned with transparency or reliability, both fail to acknowledge and give an account of the productivity of photography; that is, the manner in which, in the very act of representing, the photograph offers a particular perspective on or way of thinking about that which it depicts.

More relevant to postwar urban photography than these approaches is the approach delineated by Julia Adeney Thomas.⁵³ She contrasted what she termed recognition (a positivist pursuit of the real) and excavation (a discursive concern with representation), characterising the archaeological approach in contradistinction to the more common usage of photography by historians:

Whereas recognition embraces the image as providing historical evidence through its likeness to something in the past, excavation

⁵¹ Peter Burke, *Eyewitnessing: The Uses of Images as Historical Evidence* (London: Reaktion, 2001), p. 180.

⁵² Burke, p. 184.

⁵³ Julia Adeney Thomas, 'The Evidence of Sight', *History and Theory*, 48 (2009), 151–168.

fingers the edges of the image, seeking to recover the historical matrix out of which it came. [...] We do not ask what it is a likeness of, but rather what it was part of.⁵⁴

Highlighting the existence of photography in discursive formations, historical analysis on the archaeological model does not try to *see past the inadequacies* of the photograph as a source; rather, the aim is to *see in these supposed failings* vital information about photography itself – about photography as a key means by which that which is depicted is made meaningful. This is not necessarily to reject outright as theoretically or philosophically ungrounded other uses of photography which rely on the notion of a particular causal relation between the world and this mode of image-making – photography's indexicality. Rather, it is to profess agnosticism about the reliability of the information about the world conveyed by this particular sort of image-making, placing the question of indexicality in parentheses, even though it is necessary to recognise that this cannot be sustained in all cases. More than two decades after his explication of 'photographic discourse,' Burgin acknowledged this necessity, noting that 'the Abu Ghraib pictures are an example of the kinds of circumstances under which the question of the indexicality of a photograph actually matters.'⁵⁵

However, the identification of the discursive formations within which photographs circulate does not exhaust the theoretical concerns that need to be outlined to articulate the methodology for this research project. While the idea of the 'photographic text' as proposed by Burgin is constructive in illuminating the importance of discursive formations, it is also complex and not without issue. It acts as a useful metaphor to illustrate the manner in which a photograph may be overlaid with different values, ideas and meanings depending on the discursive formations in which it circulates. But the similarities between a photograph and a text can be overplayed such that analysis loses sight of the distinct character of visual material, which we might call *visuality*. Visuality cannot be left out of a cultural history of photography. While a photograph can resemble a text in important and informative ways, it is not (as Burgin contended) a text 'like any other'. A photograph may, as Burgin claimed, be always *surrounded by text* (whether on the printed page or in an individual's recollection), but to construe the photograph as *text* is a distracting mischaracterisation. The myriad relations between texts and images will be central to this study, but such an approach

⁵⁴ Julia Adeney Thomas, 151–168 (pp. 153–4).

⁵⁵ *Photography Theory*, ed. by James Elkins (Abingdon: Routledge, 2007), pp. 368–9.

to the problem – termed a form of ‘textual reductionism’ by J. J. Long and Edward Welch – is not sufficient to account for this complex relation.⁵⁶ To appreciate the role of urban photography in the context of the various discursive formations of the postwar era, it is necessary to attend carefully to the interaction of image and words, not simply to subsume the operation of the photograph under the terminology of linguistic analysis. This task has not always been taken seriously in the field of photography studies. Photographs permit a great malleability, shifting significance as they circulate in new publications or periods. Mason’s image of St Paul’s, for instance, was published in the *Berliner Illustrierte Zeitung* framed in a very different manner (fig. 1.3).⁵⁷ The malleability of the photograph has given rise to a persistent privileging of the verbal over visual representation when it comes to analysing photography. This can be traced back to the analyses of Roland Barthes in the 1950s and 1960s.⁵⁸ Barthes tried to unpick the way in which a photograph communicates and began with the relation between words and images. In his analyses, words could ‘anchor’ the meaning of an errant or ambiguous image, or they might enter into an equal relation where the meaning of an image is conjured through a ‘relay’ of associations between the photograph and its caption. But for the Barthes of the 1950s and 1960s, the content of the image itself was always subservient to the privileged power of the word. In their seminal contributions to the field of photography studies, Burgin and Barthes both assume, on the basis of the polysemic nature of the photograph, the central importance of the caption and language in determining meaning. In doing so, both place a great deal of faith in the stability of linguistic meaning and largely ignore the specific characteristics of visual material.

Though influential, such a model of the relation between word and image is too restrictive and biased in favour of the importance of language to achieve the sort of interpretation required by the visual culture of postwar reconstruction in Western Europe – an interpretation which accounts for the visibility of the photographs, as well as their dynamic relations with individual captions, wider debates and the built environment. The polysemic nature of the photograph should persuade us to focus on

⁵⁶ Edward Welch and J. J. Long, ‘Introduction: A Small History of Photography Studies’, in *Photography: Theoretical Snapshots*, ed. by J. J. Long, Andrea Noble and Edward Welch (Abingdon: Routledge, 2008), pp. 1–15 (p. 4).

⁵⁷ The headline declared, ‘The city of London is burning!’ (‘Die City von London brennt!’), *Berliner Illustrierte Zeitung*, 23 January 1941, p. 1).

⁵⁸ Such as Roland Barthes, ‘Rhetoric of the Image’, in *Classic Essays on Photography*, ed. by Alan Trachtenberg (New Haven: Leete’s Island Books, 1980), pp. 269–285.

the interaction of the image with other elements of the relevant discursive field, not simply to fall back on the means of analysis forged for interpreting texts. What is required is a model of the relation between words and images that is attentive to their specific occurrences and a vocabulary capable of distinguishing between the varied networks of relations. Just as the methodology can benefit from the linguistic turn in cultural studies, so too can it draw on the pictorial turn. The work of W. J. T. Mitchell on visual culture will be instructive in determining a more appropriate model of this relation, since it attempts to tease apart the different relations images and texts can have without privileging one over the other.⁵⁹ In *Picture Theory: Essays on Verbal and Visual Representation* (1995), Mitchell analyses the differing relations and interactions between texts and pictures and employs a dynamic and action-oriented vocabulary, characterising relations in terms of collaboration, exchange, resistance, subversion and cooperation.⁶⁰ Moreover, attending to the question of visibility is vitally important because of the repeated use of metaphors employing visual terms which suffused the reconstruction effort. As will be demonstrated, the faculty of sight was frequently invoked in discussion of anything from architectural style to international cooperation. Visibility pertains not only to the photograph, therefore, but also to language. It is a property not just of visual material, but any cultural artefact bound up with the sense of vision and the act of visualising. A critical and interpretive vocabulary which can capture these relations is essential.⁶¹

In jettisoning the positivist error-correction model, attending instead to the discursive formations relevant to photography of the period, and holding in balance the shifting relationship between words and images, this cultural history is indebted to the

⁵⁹ It should perhaps be noted, however, that Mitchell might well regard the methodological framework outlined here with suspicion: 'I tend not to be greatly interested in the question of methodologies [...] One methodology that I find quite problematic is the comparative method' (Margarita Dikovitskaya, *Visual Culture: The Study of the Visual After the Cultural Turn* (Cambridge, MA.: MIT Press, 2006), p. 249.

⁶⁰ W. J. T. Mitchell, *Picture Theory: Essays on Verbal and Visual Representation* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994) see in particular chapter four.

⁶¹ An aside is perhaps helpful to clarify my use of the term 'visuality'. In short, I use visibility in a way analogous to textuality – i.e. to imply the condition of being visual or concerning vision. Visibility is thus a possible quality of words, as well as images. Negotiating the distinction between vision and visibility, Hal Foster writes that 'the difference between the terms signals a difference within the visual – between the mechanism of sight and its historical techniques, between the datum of vision and its discursive determinations' (Hal Foster, *Vision and Visuality* (New York: New Press, 1999), p. ix). My use of the term visibility to refer in general to the condition of being visual or concerning vision will allow an assessment of how, in the postwar moment (through the mediation of photographic imagery and a vocabulary loaded with references to seeing and vision), the visual defined key terms and topics of the reconstruction debate.

history of *mentalités*. As Roger Chartier observes, 'Unlike economic or social historians, who reconstitute what was, the historian of mentalities or ideas seeks not the real but the ways in which people considered and transposed reality.'⁶² In other words, it looks to reflect on the role photographic representation played in what Jacques Le Goff termed 'the mental infrastructure of the period.'⁶³ However, despite the apparent synergy between the idea of the mental infrastructure of a period and the 'History of Systems of Thought' (the name Foucault chose for his Chair at the Collège de France in 1970), there is – as Patricia O'Brien noted – a fundamental incompatibility between the history of mentalities and the analysis of discourse.⁶⁴ If the study of mentalities looks to survey or to gauge the thinking of a given period from historical sources, then this study falls outside that branch of historical writing, for it does not seek to reconstruct what was thought about the photography of urban space in the postwar period. It looks rather to reflect on the function postwar urban photography had in ways of thinking about architecture, reconstruction and the city.

One way to pursue a mentalities-style approach might be through research into exhibition visitor books, letters pages or diaries looking for comments on the reception of photographic publications or exhibitions. But such an exercise in what Victoria de Grazia has termed 'a historian's notion of reception' would produce scant material.⁶⁵ If nothing else, this empirical difficulty makes obvious the importance of an alternative method. However, the more pressing reason is the productivity of the photograph already highlighted. An example of a mentalities-style approach to the cultural history of photography is found in Caroline Brothers' *War and Photography: A Cultural History* (1997), which compared reportage photography of the Spanish Civil War circulating in the French and British press.⁶⁶ Brothers attempted a reverse-engineering, from the interpretation of the manner in which photographs were framed, to the mentalities or

⁶² Roger Chartier, *Cultural History: Between Practices and Representations* (Cambridge: Polity, 1988), p. 43.

⁶³ Jacques Le Goff, 'Mentalities: A History of Ambiguities', in *Constructing the Past: Essays in Historical Methodology*, ed. by Jacques Le Goff and Pierre Nora (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), p. 173.

⁶⁴ Patricia O'Brien, 'Michel Foucault's History of Culture', in *The New Cultural History*, ed. by Lynn Hunt (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989), pp. 25–46 (p. 37).

⁶⁵ Victoria de Grazia, 'Visualizing the Marshall Plan: The Pleasures of American Consumer Democracy or the Pains of 'the Greatest Structural Adjustment Program in History'?', in *Images of the Marshall Plan in Europe: Films, Photographs, Exhibits, Posters*, ed. by Günter Bischof and Dieter Stiefel (Innsbruck: StudienVerlag, 2009).

⁶⁶ Caroline Brothers, *War and Photography: A Cultural History* (Abingdon: Routledge, 1997).

attitudes shared by the reading public of the various publications and which accounted for how such framings were meaningful: 'The evidence of greatest historical interest lies less in what the photograph literally depicts than in the way it relates to and makes visible the culture of which it is a part.'⁶⁷ Such an approach, though avoiding the desire to see through the image to the world of the past, is mute regarding the productive nature of photographic representation. It cannot account for the fact that photographs do not just depict something, they do something.

Rather than considering how photography 'makes visible the culture of which it is a part,' it is necessary to consider how *the visible and the visual make culture*. That is, to consider the photograph not just as the product of a particular historical moment, but as an actor within historical processes. This is the contribution of anthropology to the methodology required for this study – the concept of the agency of the object.⁶⁸ Photographs possess an agency or intentionality. They are not just images *of a scene*; they are *about a scene*. They instantiate a position towards a scene: positive or negative, tragic or comic, surrealist or humanist. This intentionality is not constituted uniquely by the photographer or publisher's intention, but by the discursive formation in which the image is located. Thus, the interpretation of city photography with regard to attitudes, beliefs and mind-sets about urban space is not simply a question of what the image *shows* of the decisions taken about architecture and town planning of the period; it is a matter of what the image actively promotes as a perspective on or attitude towards the issues of the period by the manner of its representation and the means of its circulation.

Such an approach to visual material is not always well received. In *New Perspectives on Historical Writing* (2001), for instance, Ivan Gaskell says of such a discussion:

It seems worth remarking that this strategy arises from the very real difficulty of defining the baffling, conceptual, perceptual and affective complexity of the object. Our task must be to discover a means of defining that complexity without recourse to the ascription of properties

⁶⁷ Brothers, p. 22.

⁶⁸ As Auslander articulated in the plea for material culture as an object of historical research, 'objects not only are the product of history, they are also active agents in history. In their communicative, performative, emotive, and expressive capacities, they act, have effects in the world' (Auslander, 1015–1045 (p. 1017)).

(such as agency) which can only be false and of rhetorical efficacy alone.⁶⁹

Gaskell's perspective is based perhaps on three assumptions which this study rejects: firstly, that the realm of the past is directly accessible by the historian in some manner that is unmediated or at least privileged and outside rhetoric; secondly, that the photograph is a resource which offers such unmediated and inert access if 'read' correctly; thirdly that there is a proper vocabulary to describe the manner in which culture operates and that such a vocabulary is restricted to a specific register (or 'proper' discourse) which excludes expressive language in favour of a vocabulary with a more dispassionate or scientific flavour. This study – by contrast – proceeds on a different assumption. Foucault stated that 'The question of power is greatly impoverished if posed solely in terms of legislation, or the constitution, or the state.'⁷⁰ This study argues that the study of photography is impoverished if you exclude the notion of photographic agency from the terms of analysis; if the photograph is considered merely as a product of and not as an agent in historical processes. Photography is quite different from and more complicated than the positivist picture allows. As Elizabeth Edwards has argued, discussion of agency is 'not a collapse into personification and fetishism of the photograph, but rather it clears a space to allow for an excess, or an extension, beyond the semiotic'.⁷¹ Consideration of the agency of the photograph thus counters the textual reductionism outlined above.

It should be noted from the outset that this theoretical model of the photograph as an intentional visual object entails a particular conception of the relationship between photography and its audience. It is paralleled by the notion of 'spectatorship' in film studies as articulated by Judith Mayne. Mayne highlights the manner in which a time-limited experience like cinema-going has the potential to exercise influence over attitudes long after any particular film has ended:

⁶⁹ Ivan Gaskell, 'Visual History', in *New Perspectives on Historical Writing*, ed. by Peter Burke, 2nd ed (Cambridge: Polity, 2001), p. 192.

⁷⁰ Michel Foucault, 'The Eye of Power', in *Foucault Live: Collected Interviews, 1961-1984*, ed. by Sylvère Lotringer (New York: Semiotext(e), 1996), p. 235.

⁷¹ (Elizabeth Edwards, *Raw Histories: Photographs, Anthropology and Museums* (Oxford: Berg, 2001), p. 18). Edwards goes on to posit that the 'powers and possibilities [of the photograph] emerge in the intersubjective encounter'. Principally, this present study examines the function of photography in promoting attitudes to urban space. However, section 4.3 does consider the position of photography in relations between people (rather than between places and people), analysing the identification with former adversaries invited through the pages of the illustrated press.

Spectatorship refers to how film-going and the consumption of movies and their myths are symbolic activities, culturally significant events. [...] spectatorship is not just the relationship that occurs between the viewer and the screen, but also and especially how that relationship lives on once the spectator leaves the theater [sic].⁷²

The same relation obtains between photography and its audience (whether circulated in a newspaper, photobook, magazine or official pamphlet). Only by grasping the act of spectatorship which urban photographs invite is it possible to fully appreciate the function of the photographic discourse in social and political change of the period and draw informative comparisons between nations. Discussion here will use the term 'viewer' as an equivalent for the static image of Mayne's use of 'spectator' for the moving image. The term 'reader' applied to newspaper photography, photo-books or photo-magazines risks undermining the centrally important visual character of photography and how visual culture has a lasting impact on ways of seeing and thinking about urban space. Such an approach, rather than studying a particular audience, examines cultural artefacts, their representational strategies and their modes of address. (The implications of adopting this approach for the historical claims made, along with the issue of reception, will be considered in more detail in the final section of this introduction which discusses the selection of primary material).

Having discussed three of the key terms (discourse, visibility, and agency), we come to the final one: iconoclasm. An expanded meaning of the term is required to understand the manner in which photography operates, going beyond the destruction of purely religious icons (such as the Bamiyan Buddhas in Afghanistan, destroyed by the Taliban in March 2001) to encompass the secular icons which photography helps produce and challenge.⁷³ If an icon is understood as an object or image deemed to represent something of value to a given community, it can encompass not only individual people (the stars of stage and screen, for instance), but also a building (St Paul's Cathedral) or place ('Ground Zero' after 11 September 2001). Integral to making such icons meaningful are processes of image-making like photography. Iconoclasm in

⁷² Judith Mayne, *Cinema and Spectatorship* (Abingdon: Routledge, 1993), pp. 1–3.

⁷³ Dario Gamboni has traced the shifting meanings of 'iconoclasm,' 'vandalism' and other related terms. He noted how the meaning of 'iconoclasm' shifted 'from the destruction of religious images and opposition to the religious use of images', to encompass 'the destruction of, and opposition to, any images or works of art' and also challenges to valued institutions and beliefs (Dario Gamboni, *The Destruction of Art: Iconoclasm and Vandalism Since the French Revolution* (London: Reaktion, 1997), pp. 17–20).

this context is the attempts to smash, unmask, besmirch or in other ways attack the icon or image in response to the value it is considered to have or represent. The attack on the World Trade Centre is an important twenty-first century example. Representations of death and destruction vied for primacy in the days after the event, with some disappearing from circulation (most notably, Richard Drew's image often referred to as 'The Falling Man') and some becoming amongst the most widely circulated photographs in the history of the medium (like Thomas Franklin's image of fire-fighters raising a flag, issued as a stamp in an edition of 255 million by the United States Postal Service).⁷⁴ It hardly needs reiterating that, beyond the borders of the United States, the event has had far-reaching implications in terms of military conflict, international relations and political decision-making. Central to this has been a war of images, from the video messages circulated by Osama Bin Laden throughout his time in hiding to the photographs of President George W. Bush aboard the USS Abraham Lincoln, declaring victory in Iraq in May 2003, and the images from the White House Situation Room in May 2011, showing President Barack Obama during the operation to assassinate Bin Laden.

The photographs surrounding the events of 11 September 2001 demonstrate two facets of the photograph's role in the production and contestations of modern day icons relevant to this study: the oppositional nature of image-making (wherein one photograph counters or opposes another) and the contrasting tendency of images to emulate other images (the parallels between Franklin's image and Joe Rosenthal's photograph of the flag raising at Iwo Jima – also issued as a postage stamp – being a prominent example). Photography's role in twentieth and twenty-first century iconoclasm also underlines the other important aspects of the medium highlighted above which are central to the analysis that follows. It demonstrates the discursive formations in which photographs circulate (one image made meaningful in relation to others); it highlights the importance of visuality (the primacy of making something seen and the reaction to visual material, be it a building or a face); it underlines the agency of the image (one image brings about the pursuit of another to support it or oppose it).

A form of iconoclasm can also be seen to pertain to the relationship between historiography and the medium of photography, perhaps in response to the often-claimed indexicality of the photograph. Aware of the wealth and importance of images

⁷⁴ David Friend, *Watching the World Change: The Stories Behind the Images of 9/11* (London: I.B.Tauris, 2006), p. 312.

in the twentieth century, and sensitive to the superficiality or focus on visuality that they propagate and promote, historical writing has frequently responded in an iconoclastic manner, tending either to shun or to seek to unmask images. An essay on photography, titled 'Clichés', is found in the centre pages of Richard Vinen's *A History in Fragments: Europe in the Twentieth Century* (2002). Opening with a quotation from Virginia Woolf's *Three Guineas* (1938) and illustrated by 21 photographs, Vinen's short essay is an example of such an iconoclastic stance vis-à-vis photography. Having highlighted the role of photography in making iconic individuals, events and phenomena as diverse as Neville Chamberlain, the Holocaust and the mini-skirt, Vinen rightly cautions, 'Photography is not, however, an unproblematic representation of "reality." Photographs are subject to all sorts of manipulations'.⁷⁵ With examples clustered in the middle decades of the century, he goes on to highlight some of these manipulations and recount stories about pioneering publications (like the *Berliner Illustrierte Zeitung* or *Vu*) and mythic figures (such as Robert Capa and Robert Doisneau). Vinen seems to value photography's capacity to 'record dramatic events' or 'capture action,' describing the Spanish Civil War as, 'the midwife of photojournalism'.⁷⁶ But, lamenting the growth of lifestyle magazines and image banks, he ultimately concludes that photography should be considered more as 'artifice rather than as a window on reality'.⁷⁷ He disdainfully recounts how, 'In 1998 Magnum, the agency set up by left-wing adventurers to cover wars and revolutions, was offering a photograph of a sunflower that could, it was suggested, illustrate any article on "happiness"'.⁷⁸ Ultimately, what seems at first a contribution to the role of photography in historiography is an iconoclastic essay denigrating the value of the photograph to scholarship.⁷⁹

⁷⁵ Richard Vinen, *A History in Fragments: Europe in the Twentieth Century* (London: Abacus, 2002), p. 259.

⁷⁶ Vinen, pp. 259 & 268.

⁷⁷ Vinen, p. 263.

⁷⁸ Vinen, p. 263.

⁷⁹ This iconoclastic approach to photography is not limited to historians, however. Susie Linfield has argued that it is a stance shared by many photography critics: 'They approach photography [...] with suspicion, mistrust, anger, and fear. [...] For them photography is a powerful, duplicitous force to defang rather than an experience to embrace and engage. It's hard to resist the thought that a very large number of photography critics – including the most influential ones – don't really like photographs, or the act of looking at them, at all' (Susie Linfield, *The Cruel Radiance: Photography and Political Violence* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2010), p. 5).

Vinen does not set out to write a history of photography and should not be criticised for failing to do so. His reflection on the medium, so central to the century he considers, is a welcome change to the more common practice of reproducing familiar images with little meaningful commentary – a process which presumably falls to publishing houses more often than historians. Yet Vinen's approach is still lacking in important ways. Partaking of an iconoclastic response to some of the iconic images of the twentieth century, it fails to recognise the active part played by photographs in that century. As Derek Sayer has argued, 'photography does not merely document realities [reliably or otherwise] that would be the same if nobody took pictures of them. Photographic images constitute our reality in a way and to an extent that has no equivalent in earlier history.'⁸⁰ It is this capacity to influence individuals, events and phenomena, this agency – entangled with discursive formations and the question of visibility – that must be addressed more urgently than the artifice or superficiality of the medium. Vinen's essay is emblematic of the intellectual holding pattern that photography has been stuck in for the past decade in relation to the discipline of history. Its arrival has been frequently announced, invited or encouraged, but it has never quite arrived.⁸¹ The concepts of discourse, visibility, agency and iconoclasm outlined here are central to addressing the active and productive role photography has played in the history of the twentieth century, which is itself an important facet of our own self-understanding in the twenty-first century.

The kernel of this approach, then, is as follows: The photograph is not simply a record of or window on the world, but a means of directing ways of looking at and thinking about the world; thus, analysis of the photograph must tackle the specific publication and cultural constellation of ideas and other images which determine its significance at the time of original circulation, which can be markedly different from whatever value or importance it has now. In short, this study concerns *photographs as productive, visual and intentional objects in use*. Consequently, the primary material

⁸⁰ Derek Sayer, 'The Photograph: The Still Image', in *History Beyond the Text: A Student's Guide to Approaching Alternative Sources*, ed. by Sarah Barber and Corinna M. Penniston-Bird (Abingdon: Routledge, 2009), pp. 49–71.

⁸¹ Between Burke's discussion in 2001 and Adney Thomas' reflection in 2010, there was amongst other interventions, the discussion network H-German, which hosted a forum in September 2006, titled 'German History after the Visual Turn'. In this forum, Paul Betts pointed to a central irony of twentieth century historiography: 'the twentieth-century explosion of visual media worldwide – forever altering the way most people see and understand the world, each other and themselves – has exerted relatively little impact on twentieth-century history-writing as a whole' (Paul Betts, 'Some Reflections on the 'Visual Turn'', *H-German Forum*, 2006 <http://www.h-net.org/~german/discuss/visual/visual_index.htm> [accessed 14 November 2011]).

that this study addresses is the published photograph in circulation, and not the photograph preserved in the archive (whether it was used by the architect in the design process or commissioned by the politicians as a record of the time).⁸² In using this theoretical model of the photograph, it is important not to fall into the trap highlighted by Chartier – ‘the reification that equates the substance of thought to cultural objects’ – and overstate what such an analysis achieves, arguing from the interpretation of *potential* positions to the *actual* existence of a homogenous set of opinions within a given group.⁸³ While such a study will make clear important issues regarding the intention of photographs, the perennial problem of reception does not go away. It is not correct to assert, as Burgin has, that the photograph presents “‘an offer you can’t refuse’”.⁸⁴ It is incorrect to suggest that the photographic publications of the period work on a blank slate, reliably forming the viewers’ attitudes afresh each time *ex nihilo*. The network of issues that determine the importance or significance of a photograph at a given point includes the history of its production, the nature of its circulation and the reception of the photograph by its audience.⁸⁵ This study will look at the second of these factors, asking how urban photography of the period of postwar reconstruction in Western Europe, and the debates which surrounded it, might have influenced attitudes to key topics in the period through its mode of address to its audience.

⁸² This study does not tackle the role of photography in exhibitions of the postwar period for two principal reasons. The first is practical. With published printed material, the complete cultural product is preserved and accessible; whereas, to interpret the potential impact of an exhibition on ways of seeing and thinking about key topics, it would be necessary to research and re-imagine the physical space of the exhibition long since dismantled – a demanding task, even if comprehensive records of the contents and layout have been kept, which is outside the scope of this research. The second reason is to do with possible reach of a magazine, book or pamphlet. It is assumed that the published material has at least the capacity to reach a broader audience than an exhibition, being tied neither to a specific space nor time, capable of being passed from person to person, or presented for public consumption in a library. One notable exception, considered in chapter five, is *The Family of Man*, which toured the globe in the mid-1950s.

⁸³ Chartier, p. 34.

⁸⁴ Burgin, p. 146. Regarding reception, it should be acknowledged from the start that the polysemic nature of images means the possibility always exists that images could be read or viewed against the grain, disrupting rather than affirming dominant ways of representation and of addressing audiences. The instability or polysemous nature of the photograph makes its explication and analysis a difficult task. At every point another potential reading offers itself and parsing the predominant modes of address from potential counter-readings is perhaps the most demanding element of this research. Notwithstanding this difficulty, the centrality of photography to debates about postwar reconstruction makes it an essential task. Where deemed appropriate such alternative readings will be acknowledged and discussed.

⁸⁵ Gillian Rose, *Visual Methodologies: An Introduction to the Interpretation of Visual Materials*, 2nd edn (London: SAGE Publications, 2007), p. 13.

1.3 *Interdisciplinary Issues: Identity, Memory, Space and Utopia*

Having evaluated the historiography of postwar reconstruction in Western Europe and outlined the theoretical model of photography relevant to this study, a number of interdisciplinary terms require further consideration. These terms relate to questions of identity, memory, space and utopia. They include imagined communities, urban space, cultural memory and, finally, utopian visions. These are expansive concepts, each with their own history of differing interpretations and applications. It will be sufficient here to define these terms as they are employed in this study.

The photographs to be analysed played a part in forming collective identities; specifically, in the creation of a sense of a significant sameness amongst a group of individuals (and between groups) over time and space. The nature or content of these identities could include a shared attitude to a past event, a shared experience of and values regarding contemporary everyday life, or a shared vision of and hopes for the future. Through the discursive formations in which they are located and the agency they possess, photographs are a means of representation that can promote, contest, reshape or reassert such collective identities, centred on attitudes, values, emotions or aspirations. In a study of nationhood and identity, Benedict Anderson coined the term 'imagined communities' to designate the manner in which people who will never meet each other can come to feel part of the same nation.⁸⁶ This term is also helpful in considering collective identities or a sense of association and connection for groups defined in terms other than the nation; imagined communities can span national borders, just as the imagined community of the nation can connect contemporaries with the dead. Photography is able to cross national borders and language barriers with relative ease. This capacity has meant it played a part in the construction of the imagined transnational communities under consideration here. Anderson argued that, 'No nation imagines itself coterminous with mankind.'⁸⁷ However, in the postwar period there was a concerted effort to imagine various transnational communities, an endeavour attributable in part to both the past war closely associated with nations and nationalisms and the polarisation of nations relating to Cold War tensions. These transnational imagined communities co-existed – then as now – with a host of other

⁸⁶ Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, 2nd edn (London: Verso, 1991).

⁸⁷ Anderson, p. 7.

imagined communities (national, local, political, professional). The merit of Anderson's concept of identity formation as the construction of an imagined community is twofold. Firstly, it highlights the constructed nature of a sense of identity or community. Secondly, rather than the unified or monolithic implications of the term 'identity,' it implies the possibility of an individual's identification with multiple communities.

Urban space is, in a sense, the ground upon which are founded the imagined communities that urban photographs promote. The buildings, towns and cities depicted are not inert, just as the photograph is not simply a transparent means of representation. Urban space is always already symbolic. This cultural aspect of material space has been compared to Anderson's imagined community concept by Alev Çinar and Thomas Bender: 'Just as nations are imagined communities, it is possible to conceive of cities as imagined places [...] Just as the "nation" is an abstract concept that is reified through a variety of different representations circulating in daily life, so is the "city"'.⁸⁸ Thinking of urban space as imagined space is essential here, since it directs attention away from what the photograph depicts – deflecting the urge to *see through the image* – onto the way in which the photograph frames its subject. In other words, to consider urban space as imagined space is to concentrate on its capacity to stand for a set of ideas or values which implicate it in the construction of collective identities or imagined communities. Such ideas and values – inherited from previous eras – were variously mobilised and reinforced or contested and re-inflected in the period of postwar reconstruction. Space, then, is not an entity devoid of significance; it is made significant. In this sense, it can be said to be socially and culturally produced. The meaning and importance of a given space is constructed through social interaction, encompassing both the interaction of a society within and with that space and the representation of such space in culture. As Maria Balshaw and Liam Kennedy have argued, 'The city is inseparable from its representations, but it is neither identical with nor reducible to them – and so it poses complex questions about how representations traffic between physical and mental space'.⁸⁹ This notion of 'traffic' is valuable in interrogating the complexity of these connections. The representation of the built environment in photography is not simply a capturing or depicting of urban

⁸⁸ Alev Çinar and Thomas Bender, 'Introduction: The City: Experience, Imagination, and Place', in *Urban Imaginaries: Locating the Modern City*, ed. by Alev Çinar and Thomas Bender (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2007), pp. xi–xxi (pp. xii & xv).

⁸⁹ Maria Balshaw and Liam Kennedy, 'Introduction: Urban Space and Representation', in *Urban Space and Representation*, ed. by Maria Balshaw and Liam Kennedy (London: Pluto Press, 2000), pp. 1–21 (p. 3).

space as a product of social relations. As a cultural practice, photography enters into the very processes of producing urban space; of influencing its symbolic meaning and shaping its material form.

In postwar urban photography, the means by which these imagined spaces were made to symbolise is frequently through reference to the past and the future. The term 'memory' has attracted many scholarly definitions and distinctions. The most relevant to the aims of this study is that of cultural memory. Aleida Assmann recommends replacing the term *collective memory* with three distinct but connected terms: social, political and cultural memory. *Social memory* designates processes of verbal communication and social practices or traditions. *Political memory* and *cultural memory* are of another order: 'Individual and social memory cling to and abide with human beings and their embodied interaction; political and cultural memory, on the other hand, are based on the more durable carriers of symbols and material representations.'⁹⁰ The externalised or material form of political and cultural memory is relevant to both urban space and photography; they are artefacts which represent aspects of and attitudes to the past. There is an important distinction here between memory as an individual phenomenon (defined by experience at one point in time and recollection in another), and memory as relevant to collective identities or imagined communities. Memory as a collective phenomenon entails representation and communication, not direct experience and recollection – the distinction Assmann makes between an individual *having a memory* and a collective *constructing memory*.⁹¹ How the memories of particular individuals are informed or influenced by particular photographs of urban space will not be considered in what follows; this is the territory of reception. Rather, the analysis of individual publications and pictures will outline the address that photographs (as intentional objects) make to audiences – how they can be seen to function in a way that offers or promotes particular attitudes to the past.

Connected to this notion of cultural memory is cultural 'forgetting' or amnesia. If cultural memory is the attitude to the past communicated through cultural artefacts, it entails cultural amnesia since selection has as its necessary correlate, exclusion. Cultural forgetting, then, refers to the manner in which cultural artefacts, by simple

⁹⁰ Aleida Assmann, 'Four Formats of Memory: From Individual to Collective Constructions of the Past', in *Cultural Memory and Historical Consciousness in the German-Speaking World Since 1500: Papers from the Conference 'The Fragile Tradition'*, Cambridge 2002, ed. by Christian Emden and David Midgley (Oxford: Peter Lang, 2004), p. 25.

⁹¹ Aleida Assmann, pp. 25–6.

omission or active revision, work to promote the ignoring of certain aspects of the past or their excision from collective memory. Paul Connerton has identified a range of types of cultural amnesia. One of these – ‘forgetting that is constitutive in the formation of a new identity’ – highlights the connection between imagined communities and memory as mediated through cultural artefacts.⁹² John R. Gillis articulated this co-dependent relation thus: ‘the notion of identity depends on the idea of memory, and vice versa. The core meaning of any individual or group identity, namely, a sense of sameness over time and space, is sustained by remembering; and what is remembered is defined by the assumed identity.’⁹³ The revision of memories through culture can reorient identities; as collective identities are revised, cultural memory is recast or reinterpreted. In the war-damaged nations of Europe after 1945, urban space was a charged site of such revisions, reorientations and reinterpretations. Mark Crinson, in his introduction to *Urban Memory: History and Amnesia in the Modern City* (2005), described the built environment as a ‘physical landscape and collection of objects and practices that enable recollections of the past and that embody the past through traces of the city’s sequential building and rebuilding.’⁹⁴ In addressing the city as a site of cultural memory and amnesia integral to the formation of collective identities or imagined communities, it is essential to analyse the manner in which the city is framed and made meaningful through its representation in words and images.

The cultural construction of imagined communities through the representation of urban space is not simply a retrospective phenomenon; it is also future-oriented. Representations of the built environment do not only facilitate identities based on recollections of the past, they also facilitate reflections on the future. Thus, postwar rebuilding expressed utopian aspirations, as well as attitudes to the past. The Festival of Britain is an example of this dual perspective on the past and the future, recalling the Great Exhibition of 1851 and projecting a distinctive idea of a progressive, technologically advanced ‘British-ness’. Associated with unrealistic approaches to real issues (not to mention many murderous regimes of the twentieth century), the idea of

⁹² The other types of forgetting Connerton posited were: repressive erasure, prescriptive forgetting, structural amnesia, forgetting as annulment, forgetting as planned obsolescence, forgetting as humiliated silence (Paul Connerton, ‘Seven Types of Forgetting’, *Memory Studies*, 1 (2008), 59–71).

⁹³ John Gillis, ‘Memory and Identity: The History of a Relationship’, in *Commemorations: The Politics of National Identity*, ed. by John Gillis (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994), pp. 3–24 (p. 3).

⁹⁴ ‘Urban Memory – An Introduction’, in *Urban Memory: History and Amnesia in the Modern City*, ed. by Mark Crinson (Abingdon: Routledge, 2005), pp. xi–xx (p. xii).

utopia has acquired largely negative connotations in the twenty-first century. As David Pinder has noted, the norm today is 'the automatic equation of that term with impossible fantasy'.⁹⁵ In order to appreciate the role and force of future-focused thinking in the postwar period, it is necessary to re-evaluate and to some extent recuperate this term, avoiding a cynical (but not a critical) reading of the ideas and ideals of the period. Amongst the relevant phenomena to note about postwar utopian thought is the credibility of such projects in their historical context, the privileged position of the city in such projects and the centrality of vision as a metaphor and a determining consideration in the various proposals. The cities rebuilt were both part of a utopian vision and frequently expressed in terms which stressed the visual. As has already been articulated here, the buildings and the city spaces were a part of a reconstruction project which aimed not simply to replace lost or damaged buildings, but to reinforce or re-fashion the collective identities of nations beleaguered after years of total war. Indeed, as Jay Winter has asserted, 'It is the emergence of total war which has set the twentieth century apart and which has given to many twentieth-century visions their particular coloration and urgency.'⁹⁶ Reconstruction was thus a psychological, as well as an architectural project. Only by understanding this dimension of postwar reconstruction is it possible to fully appreciate the public debates of the time, interpret the photographs and draw informative comparisons between nations. The interdisciplinary concerns of imagined communities, urban space, cultural memory and utopian thinking are vital in investigating urban photography in relation to postwar reconstruction as a set of ideas and ideals.

⁹⁵ David Pinder, *Visions of the City: Utopianism, Power and Politics in Twentieth-Century Urbanism* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2005), p. 7.

⁹⁶ Jay Winter, *Dreams of Peace and Freedom: Utopian Moments in the Twentieth Century* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2006), p. 5.

1.4 A Note on Sources, Methods and Findings

The main focus points of this study addressed in the following four chapters have been determined by specific characteristics of reconstruction as it took place in Western European after the Second World War. It will be instructive to outline these briefly, to explain the exclusion of other potential research areas and to expand on the nature of the analysis and historical account delivered in the chapters that follow.

Judt characterised 'the post-war condition' common to many European countries in the aftermath of the Second World War in the following terms: 'the desire for stability and security, the expectation of renewal, the absence of traditional right-wing alternatives, and the expectations vested in the state'.⁹⁷ Several factors distinguished this postwar moment, say, from that of 1918. As Paul Betts and David Crowley note, while the First World War in Europe was principally a rural experience involving soldiers, the Second World War was principally an urban experience involving civilians⁹⁸ – a deadly phenomenon evoked in a postwar photobook of bomb-damaged Liverpool which recalled the time 'when the front line was in your street'.⁹⁹ Thus, the manner in which destruction and reconstruction were viewed across the continent in 1945 was distinct from (albeit bounded up with perceptions of) the situation in Europe in 1918. However, in Western Europe the reconstruction project was in no way limited to the rebuilding of towns and cities. As Martin Conway is reported to have observed, reconstruction was a term with 'multiple meanings'; 'a rhetorical and legitimizing term [...] used to promote a particular political and economic order in post-war Europe'.¹⁰⁰ For instance, the postwar political reconstruction (the reestablishment of parliamentary elections and democratic politics) was in many European countries no simple return to the past, but was rather marked by the politics of the past:

What emerged after 1945 was profoundly altered as a result of the region's memories of both war and of the pre-war democratic crisis. The

⁹⁷ Judt, *Postwar*, p. 81.

⁹⁸ Paul Betts and David Crowley, 'Introduction - Domestic Dreamworlds: Notions of Home in Post-1945 Europe', *Journal of Contemporary History*, 40 (2005), 213–236 (p. 219).

⁹⁹ *Pictures from the Post* (Liverpool: Liverpool Daily Post & Echo, 1945). See fig. 2.1.5.

¹⁰⁰ Jessica Reinisch, 'Comparing Europe's Post-war Reconstructions: First Balzan Workshop, Birkbeck College, London, 28 October 2005', *History Workshop Journal*, 61 (2006), 299–304 (p. 302).

role of parliament, the nature of political parties and of politics itself all emerged transformed from the struggle with fascism.¹⁰¹

In 1945, the broadly-conceived reconstruction project was not only charged with memories of the conflict that directly preceded it, but also with memories of the First World War, the failed peace and the economic and political turmoil of the interwar period. Expectations and desires for a brighter future prompted by this destructive past gave rise to what Mazower terms 'the self-consciousness of the reconstruction effort'.¹⁰²

The focus of this study is the way in which the distinctive project of postwar reconstruction and key topics relevant to it were regarded in the three comparator nations in the years after 1945 – the nature and scope of the ambition and its relation to urban photography. This distinctiveness can be summarised as follows: the centrality of urban space and civilian experience to postwar public debate; the self-awareness of the postwar moment in terms of its relevance to both material and psychological reconstruction of communities and its engagement with memories of the past and visions of the future; and the expectations placed on the reconstruction project with regard to delivering a progressive agenda for stability and renewal.¹⁰³ This distinctiveness of the European postwar moment beginning in 1945 underpins the selection of the four important areas on which this study focuses. The interconnected modes of urban photography which are the focus of the main chapters of this study cut across many of the central concerns of the period of reconstruction such as ruination and rebuilding, housing and youth, Cold War divisions and international cooperation. They address the built environment and everyday life; they represent the destruction of historic buildings and visualise the often-heralded 'city of tomorrow'; they promote the building of better cities and of peaceful relations between nations. The publications analysed encompass a range of different modes of publishing (including books, professional journals, popular magazines and official publications), and entail a variety

¹⁰¹ Mazower, *Dark Continent*, p. 291.

¹⁰² Mazower, 17–28 (p. 25).

¹⁰³ Highlighting these distinctive characteristics is not meant to suggest that no informative parallels can be drawn from comparisons between the postwar reconstructions of 1918 and 1945. The Archives nationales de France, for instance, has published a study on France in the two postwar periods: *Reconstructions et modernisation: La France après les ruines, 1918 ..., 1945 ...* (Paris: Archives nationales, 1991). See also, *Three Postwar Eras in Comparison: Western Europe, 1918-1945-1989*, ed. by Carl Levy and Mark Roseman (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002).

of different genres of photography (for example, photojournalism, architectural photography, fashion photography and aerial photography). Individually, the material addressed is representative of important publishing formats and photographic genres of the period. Together, the publications analysed illuminate the position of urban photography in crucial public debates and cultural exchange between the three comparator countries on the essential issues of postwar reconstruction in the years after 1945.

The distinctive characteristics of reconstruction in Western Europe after 1945 also justify the exclusion of a number of other research areas from this cultural history of postwar urban photography. These valuable areas of research are the subject of ongoing and revealing scholarship. But explanation of why they are not germane to this particular study will contribute to an explication of the nature of the analysis and account offered here of photography's position in the postwar conception and reconstruction of urban space. For instance, the role of photography in the rebuilding of historic monuments is an interesting issue not addressed in what follows. A study of photography's use in historical reconstruction (i.e. the rebuilding as was of destroyed monuments) would be particularly interesting for areas sustaining war damage in both the First and Second World War.¹⁰⁴ However, the focus of this present study is on the function and impact of photography in the self-conscious public debate regarding the reconstruction of urban spaces. Thus, attention is directed solely at publicly-circulating imagery. Although an analysis of the use of photography by conservators or preservationists might be complementary, it is not central to this study. In contrast, the assessment made in chapter two of the circulation of ruin photography in prominent photobooks of the period is pivotal, showing as it does how ruin imagery was closely bound up with the promotion of renewal, modernist architecture and visions of the future in this period of accelerated transnational cultural exchange.

Similarly, domestic space and interior design, though important to public debate of the period, are not addressed in detail by what follows. The ideal home was as much on view in exhibitions of the postwar years as the interiors of bomb-damaged houses were in the surrealistic photography of wartime reportage. Questions of family and

¹⁰⁴ See *Living with History, 1914–1964: Rebuilding Europe After the First and Second World Wars and the Role of Heritage Preservation*, ed. by Nicholas Bullock and Luc Verpoest (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2011). This volume compares different postwar periods and different nations, including reflections on preservation and historical reconstruction in Germany, France, Belgium and the Netherlands.

gender, design and consumption, as well as Cold War ideologies have been rich areas of enquiry for social and cultural historians of the postwar period.¹⁰⁵ The formative role photography might have played in public debate in Western Europe regarding domestic space and its meanings would be an engaging addition to this body of work.¹⁰⁶ However, while the interior of homes offered potent images in constructing ideas of postwar domesticity and family life, this study addresses external urban space and the built environment as the background of everyday social life. Priority is given to excavating the imagined social space of the city and its photographic representation in the public sphere because, in the postwar moment, public urban space – the scene of both interwar poverty and wartime destruction – was a key marker of the expectations of renewal and stability vested in the reconstruction effort. Undoubtedly, ‘the private sphere played host to powerful political dreams and desires about postwar self and society’.¹⁰⁷ Yet, the postwar urban realm held a prominent position which is equally deserving of scrutiny by cultural historians, making essential the focus in chapter three on the public housing debate and how it articulated with notions of planning future cities. What is striking about the material on the housing problem in the 1940s and early 1950s is how much attention was focused on the *design of mass housing zones* to the detriment of a constructive debate about *building successful homes*. In the veneration of high-rise housing, consideration of urban space was often privileged over domestic space in a manner that had lasting impact for both cities and citizens.

In the urban space of the postwar city, advertising appeared in myriad forms and the development of printing techniques made it more economical for its designers to use photography. Much interesting work has focused on advertising, particularly in the case of Germany, and what its excavation by cultural historians reveals regarding identities, gender and consumerism in postwar Europe.¹⁰⁸ But while analysis of the

¹⁰⁵ Betts, *The Authority of Everyday Objects*; Castillo; *Cold War Modern: Design 1945-1970*, ed. by Jane Pavitt and David Crowley (London: V&A, 2008); Claire Langhamer, ‘The Meanings of Home in Postwar Britain’, *Journal of Contemporary History*, 40 (2005), 341–362; Susan E. Reid, ‘The Kruschev Kitchen: Domesticating the Scientific Technological Revolution’, *Journal of Contemporary History*, 40 (2005), 289–316.

¹⁰⁶ Colomina has examined the visual culture of domestic space and interior design in postwar America (Beatriz Colomina, *Domesticity at War* (Barcelona: Actar, 2007)).

¹⁰⁷ Betts and Crowley, 213–236 (p. 232).

¹⁰⁸ *Consuming Germany in the Cold War*, ed. by David F. Crew (Oxford: Berg, 2003); Richard F. Kuisel, *Seducing the French: The Dilemma of Americanization* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993); *The Miracle Years: A Cultural History of West Germany, 1949-1968*, ed. by Hanna Schissler (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001); *Selling Modernity: Advertising in Twentieth-Century Germany*, ed. by Pamela E. Swett, S. Jonathan Wiesen and Jonathan R. Zatlin (Durham, NC.: Duke University Press, 2007).

manner in which representations of urban space were used in promoting the consumption of particular products might add to this study, it remains a secondary concern given the spotlight directed here on postwar attitudes to architecture and the built environment. Concerned with reconstruction as a self-conscious project, attention must be directed first and foremost towards debates and representations concerning key themes such as ruins, housing, youth, and notions of the European city and European civilisation as influenced by Cold War divisions and new alliances between old adversaries. In short, this is not a study of postwar consumerism and its relation to social change, but of postwar urbanism and the impact on it of cultural exchange. For the former, advertising and its deployment of photography is a central concern; for the latter, it is not. Rather, as undertaken in chapter four, this study must address the urban imagery in articles of the photographic press to highlight the crucial part played by the image of the city in constructing ideas of Western European identity. The cultural implications of the interrelation of the urban and the visual on thinking about the city remains the focus here, not an account or interpretation of the use of urban imagery to shape the meaning of and raise the profits from certain consumer products.

The nature of the advert – a crafted artefact in which every element is considered for its communicative potential – is a pertinent prompt to discussion of another issue which is not especially prominent in the following analysis: graphic design. Encompassing page layout and font selection, graphic design is an important point of interface between word and image. The visual qualities of the text and the spatial relations between photograph, caption, headline and body text become operative in framing the image and shaping its significance or meaning. Graphic design impresses on the critical observer a blurring of the distinction between word and image, underlining W. J. T. Mitchell's assertion that 'all media are mixed media'.¹⁰⁹ Further consideration of graphic design in the individual publications tackled here would add to what is an already lengthy study; likewise, more detailed consideration of the question of materiality (the physical characteristics of the image and its support). Where constructive, reference will be made to page layouts, borders, bleeds, fonts, and the use of illustrations, as well as on occasion the materiality of publications. However, greater attention is undoubtedly given to imagery itself and the use of language to frame the photographs. This attention stems from the prominence of photography in the self-conscious public debate about reconstruction as suggested in the constitution of UNESCO (signed in 1946, discussed in chapter five) which promoted 'the free flow of

¹⁰⁹ Mitchell, *Picture Theory*, p. 107.

ideas by word and image'. Moreover, as argued in chapter five vis-à-vis that organisation's efforts towards peace and international public debate in the period, reconstruction was not simply saturated with photographic imagery; the idea of photography and what it enabled impacted on ways of talking and thinking about postwar problems. A vocabulary was employed in collaboration with photographic imagery which obsessively emphasised and privileged visuality. For instance, UNESCO's monthly magazine, *Courier*, illustrated with photographs from around the planet, was described as 'a window on the world' offering readers the opportunity to 'look out on to wide global horizons'. The interaction of word and image in foregrounding the visual must, therefore, be the primary focus for this analysis of the meaning and significance of the city in the aftermath of the Second World War to the relative exclusion of questions of graphic design or materiality.

But why focus on photography (the still image) to the exclusion of film (the moving image)? There is certainly copious relevant material¹¹⁰ which has attracted the attention of scholars and specialists.¹¹¹ Indeed, cinema-going was the principal European leisure activity until the late 1950s prior to the advent of large television audiences.¹¹² Moreover, film production and distribution companies worked to 'extend' the filmic experience through fanzines, ephemera and fashion, making cinema much more interwoven with everyday life even though cinema-going itself was not a daily experience. Yet, photography from the beginning has been a much more diffuse medium. Found in newspapers, exhibitions, magazines, billboards, books, shop windows, official publications, not to mention its use by amateur photographers, in family albums or by portrait-takers roaming the street, by the mid-twentieth-century the experience of photography did not need to be 'extended' through surrogate means; it was already in the hands of everyone. From the rapid spread around the globe of

¹¹⁰ For example, the anthology of postwar films recently issued by the British Film Institute (*Shadows of Progress: Documentary Film in Post-War Britain, 1951-1977*), the 'ruddle films' from postwar Germany, Humphrey Jennings' *A Defeated People* (1946) or Leo de Laforge's *Berlin wie es war* (1950).

¹¹¹ For example: Olivier Dumoulin, 'A Comparative Approach to Newsreel and Bombing in the Second World War: Britain, France, Germany', in *Bombing, States and Peoples in Western Europe, 1940-1945*, ed. by Claudia Baldoli, Richard Overy and Andrew Knapp (London: Continuum, 2011), pp. 298-314; Ryan Shand, 'Visions of Community: The Postwar Housing Problem in Sponsored and Amateur Films', in *The City and the Moving Image: Urban Projections*, ed. by Richard Koeck and Les Roberts (Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan, 2010), pp. 50-68.

¹¹² Jeffrey Richards, 'Film and Television: The Moving Image', in *History Beyond the Text: A Student's Guide to Approaching Alternative Sources*, ed. by Sarah Barber and Corinna M. Penniston-Bird (Abingdon: Routledge, 2009), pp. 72-88 (p. 74).

competing photographic British and French technologies in the mid-nineteenth-century to the hugely popular photographic titles of the Weimar press, in the postwar period photography continued its advance and its penetration of everyday life. Moreover, not requiring the infrastructure of distribution networks, the machinery of projection or the translation achieved through dubbing or subtitles, photography was a more mobile medium than film. Thus, it was well-suited to transnational cultural exchange. This diffusion and mobility of photography as a medium is behind what Victor Burgin refers to as 'the ubiquitous environment of photography'.¹¹³ Cinema-going and the role of film in the postwar moment with regard to renegotiating national pasts and identities should not be underestimated as evidenced, say, by the insightful essays in *Histories of the Aftermath* (2010) already referred to.¹¹⁴ But, the moving image does not have the same claim to ubiquity in the postwar moment as does the photographic still.

The ubiquity of photography is a compelling argument for cultural historians interested in postwar ways of thinking and transnational phenomena to pay due attention to the medium and it is the impact of that ubiquity which is under scrutiny in what follows. Ultimately it will be argued that the 'ubiquitous environment of photography' had a formative and profound influence on ways of seeing and thinking about the built environment in the period. In the self-conscious reconstruction effort, there was a powerful interactivity between photographic representation and the terms of the debate about urban reconstruction, such that the latter consistently influenced the former, privileging the visual over other concerns. This important influence of the still photographic image on postwar thinking about urbanism and reconstruction is borne out in the discussion of the aesthetic appreciation of ruins facilitated through photography (chapter two), of the privileged visual character of urban space in public debate about the housing problem dominated by architectural photography (chapter three), of the prominence of the image of the city in the photographic magazines of the period (chapter three), and of the impact of photography on UNESCO's conception and instrumentalisation of culture in pursuit of its peace aims (chapter five).

The deliberate decision to exclude detailed consideration of historical reconstruction, domestic space, advertising, graphic design and film clears a space for a discussion of photography's role in postwar urban reconstruction not previously

¹¹³ Victor Burgin, *In/Different Spaces: Place and Memory in Visual Culture* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996), p. 34.

¹¹⁴ Biess and Moeller, pp. 123–172.

attempted. Adeney Thomas's suggestion of an archaeology of photographic representation is fitting.¹¹⁵ Like the archaeologist, the historian working with photographs can only examine and extrapolate from a restricted set of examples. This is a necessary limitation for the archaeologist because of limited extant material. For the excavator of late-twentieth-century photography, the necessity of restriction to a set of key examples is the only possible response to the opposite problem – a superabundance of material. Certainly, the use of photography in a number of alternative fields could have been addressed. The combined repositories of the British Library, the Bibliothèque nationale de France and the Deutsche Nationalbibliothek contain sufficient relevant material to facilitate research into a dozen other interesting topics. In each of the areas examined, a wealth of other publications could have been discussed. However, following extensive survey, the fields most pertinent to the research questions and the most representative examples from these fields have been selected for interpretation. Selection of material is a practical necessity. Notwithstanding that necessity, the issues addressed in the four main chapters of this study are paramount in tackling the function and impact of photography in public debate about the city. They address distinctive qualities of the Western European reconstruction effort after 1945, with its heightened significance of the city and its citizens, its self-conscious negotiation of memories of the past and expectations for the future, and its demands and desires for stability and renewal. This material concerned with central issues of the reconstruction is essential in tackling the manner in which the 'paper architecture' of the various books, magazines, official pamphlets and other ephemera helped to construct postwar attitudes to urban space.

But what is the nature of the account offered by this comparative study of the relation between 'the ubiquitous environment of photography' and the built environment? What primary material does it draw on and what claims does it make on the basis of that material? What follows, in short, is not a history of the reception of urban imagery, but a history of urban photography as a discourse. Historical research on the reception of postwar urban photography is impractical given both the diffuse nature of the phenomenon and the scope of topics and publication modes (the case for which is made above). The sort of evidence that would facilitate such a study of reception is at best sporadic, at worst non-existent. For instance, the urban imagery in question differs from that of advertising in that the historian cannot look to sales figures to evaluate their impact. The object of these images (the built environment) was not a

¹¹⁵ Julia Adeney Thomas, 151–168.

product for sale in a conventional sense, resulting in little comparable relevant quantitative data. Similarly, many of the relevant publications (the professional press, popular magazines, official pamphlets) are ephemera and not reviewed as films or exhibitions were. Moreover, contemporary commentaries on or qualitative assessments of relevant publications only serve to underline a deeper problem. Critics, producers or members of the public from the time do not address the specific focus of the study; that is, the function and impact of photography on interrelated regional, national and transnational debates about reconstruction. While articles on reconstruction architecture, exhibition reviews, letters pages or amateur photography magazines, along with sociological surveys, might reveal postwar attitudes to photography or reconstruction, material that addresses the relation between the two is the proverbial needle in the haystack.¹¹⁶ Moreover, given how sparse such material is, fundamental questions of source analysis (such as representativeness and reliability) become all the more insistent.

Voices from the period are not completely absent in what follows, however, and various conceptions of photography articulated in the period will be touched on. But rather than rely heavily on a handful of comments by individuals, analysis addresses dozens of images chosen from a survey of thousands more. Rather than tracing the reception of the images by their audience, it tackles the manner in which the image addresses its audience. It thus excavates a history of photography as discourse; as a set of interrelated strategies of representation constituted by text and images, by the frames of reference and invocations they conjure, by repeated metaphors and concepts, citations and values. A central contention of this study – the success of which is borne out by the important overarching conclusions it facilitates – is that only in applying the model of photography outlined above to a selection of images drawn from the key topics and publications of the period is it possible to grasp the function of postwar urban photography in reconstruction debates. No material other than the vast, diffuse corpus of images will facilitate answers to the research questions posed. Postwar commentaries on photography, architecture and its reception simply fail to

¹¹⁶ Recent scholarship on the reception of the *Family of Man* exhibition (discussed in detail in chapter five) is an example of how such source material regarding reception – interesting though it is – does not get at the function of urban photography in postwar debates about reconstruction. Eric J. Sandeen mines the reports from US diplomats of responses to the exhibition as it toured the various countries. This includes fascinating observations and anecdotes, but little which contributes to the analysis of urban photography in debates about reconstruction (Eric J Sandeen, 'The International Reception of The Family of Man', *History of Photography*, 29 (2005), 344–355).

illuminate this particular historical problem with any great force. To do so, interpretative and comparative analyses of the photographs in circulation understood as intentional and visual artefacts, must be asserted over and above research into the reception of images, publications, exhibitions or buildings.

This is not necessarily to suggest that reception is an invalid line of enquiry for cultural historians. Simply that, given the subject of this study, it is not a priority. As with the question of the photograph's indexicality, it is an issue which is here placed in parentheses with the interpretation of the artefact's address to its audience given primacy over the sparse material regarding its reception. Alexander Badenoch's *Voices in the Ruins: West German Radio Across the 1945 Divide* (2008) is an example of innovative work being undertaken on postwar mass culture drawing on material that can illuminate the question of reception:

As is visible in post received by the stations, the interpretations of broadcast content varied greatly, but even in most critical responses it is clear that listeners use the radio to imagine a private "national community". In fact, the idea of such bounded, private spaces of home formed the rhetorical basis for assertions of what did and did not belong inside the domestic sphere of the nation.¹¹⁷

It is perhaps not coincidental that Badenoch addresses a media grounded in language and finds much valuable written material on the reception of the medium. Words heard prompt words written. In contrast, the ubiquitous urban imagery that is the focus of this study prompted little revealing commentary. It was the wallpaper, not the framed picture.

This favouring of a theory-informed model of the photograph (*a productive, intentional visual object in use*) to interpret the manner in which urban imagery addressed its historical audience over empirical evidence (contemporary commentary and observation) of photography's reception will no doubt rankle with some sensibilities about what history is and is not. Tony Judt articulated a more conventional or traditional view of the relation between history and theory: 'the more Theory intrudes, the farther History recedes'.¹¹⁸ The risk of such a didactic and dichotomous stance is surely that

¹¹⁷ Badenoch, p. 226.

¹¹⁸ Judt, *Postwar*, p. 399.

an otherwise healthy suspicion of jargon on the historian's part becomes a stubborn refusal to engage with pressing issues of the twentieth century, such as the formative influence of media on the public sphere. Caution regarding obfuscation and speculation tips over into a wilful ignorance incited by an aversion to other disciplinary approaches. Such reactionary 'defences' of the discipline of history falsely represent the work of innumerable scholars who draw (explicitly or otherwise) on insights gained from other fields.¹¹⁹ Moreover, they fail to reflect the discipline's own history which, rather than a defensive opposition to theory with a capital 'T' has perennially drawn productively on diverse approaches and methodologies. Vinen cautions against a narrowing of diversity or ingenuity of interpretive approaches to primary material in the discipline over recent decades as attention has focused less on ancient history and more on contemporary historical problems (such as the death and destruction of and the relation between the First and Second World Wars): 'The innovation and intellectual audacity deployed by those studying earlier periods seems unnecessary when the questions to be asked appear so obvious.'¹²⁰ Being perhaps less obvious, the research questions underpinning this study demand a rekindling of the sort of innovation Vinen notes.

What the theory-informed model applied to postwar urban imagery here facilitates which empirical evidence of reception cannot is a sustained consideration of spectatorship; how photography's mode of address 'lives on' after the moment of encounter with particular images, actively shaping ways of looking at and thinking about urban space in the decade after the Second World War.¹²¹ This study contrasts sharply with work like Cora Sol Goldstein's, *Capturing the German Eye: American Visual Propaganda in Occupied Germany* (2009). While Badenoch analyses the reception and meaning of radio programmes in postwar Germany, Goldstein addresses the people and politics behind the visual propaganda of the US occupation force. As such, it is sharply focused on the fascinating narratives of institutions and individuals, but entails relatively little critical engagement with the visual material *qua* visual material; the appeals or address it made to its audience. This is an untenable position

¹¹⁹ Judt himself, considering the undoing of the postwar social contract with particular reference to political debate in the United States, does not fit the model of reductive positivist he elsewhere comes close to advocating when it comes to questions of language, politics and representation. Discussing the negative connotations of the terms 'socialism' and 'social democracy' and the impact this has on politicians and policy, he asserts, 'Our disability is *discursive*: we simply do not know how to talk about these things any more' (Tony Judt, *Ill Fares the Land* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 2010), p. 34).

¹²⁰ Vinen, p. 3.

¹²¹ Mayne, p. 3.

in relation to a cultural history of postwar urban photography in Western Europe. As a diffuse phenomenon, prevalent across a host of publication formats, drawing on a range of genres of photography and cutting across numerous interrelated topics of the reconstruction period, the actions and intentions of producers of postwar urban photography is neither fully recoverable nor reconcilable. A study of production, like reception, would be both impractical and insufficient to tackle the function and impact of postwar urban photography, as this comparative and transnational history seeks to do. It is exactly the 'traffic between physical and mental space'¹²² effected by such representations which histories of institutions and individuals or of reception fail to illuminate. Historical assessment of this phenomenon requires an interdisciplinary approach which can evaluate the address of postwar urban photography to its audience. This is a critical examination of photography in historical processes focusing on the artefact itself; it is pointedly not a history of photography which avoids critical engagement with the object, focusing instead on its producers or consumers.

While the archives provide the depth and detail of material to write the political and architectural histories of reconstruction, libraries retain the publicly-circulating material required to research this cultural history of urban photography in the period of postwar reconstruction. From this wealth of material individual images are singled out for interpretation and analysis. Selecting specific images entails a massive reduction of the field of primary material, but it should not be taken to imply a heavy burden of explanation on a few images, as if they alone are considered a sufficient cause for some of the phenomena discussed. There are three sorts of images interpreted in detail in this study – the representative, the atypical and those which offer a meta-commentary on the role of photography in the postwar public debate on the city and reconstruction. For instance, a photo-story of daily life in Berlin published in *Picture Post* (figs. 4.3.3 to 4.3.5) is typical of the humanising photojournalism of the illustrated press discussed in chapter four, while the surrealistic imagery of felled statues in post-liberation Paris by Pierre Jahan (figs. 2.2.4 to 2.2.6) is atypical of much ruin photography and the two photographs of a West German apartment with floor to ceiling windows (figs. 3.4.26 and 3.4.27) open on to a wider discussion of the postwar promotion of the visual consumption of urban space. Analysis focuses on specific images such as these, not to suggest they alone carry a particular weight in shaping attitudes to the pressing issues of the postwar urban reconstruction, but because they

¹²² Balshaw and Liam Kennedy, pp. 1–21 (p. 3).

exemplify or prompt reflection on how images in a given discursive formation can be seen to function or exhibit agency.

In pursuit of this end, four different types of urban photography published in four different formats will be considered, demanding four distinctly different comparative approaches. Chapter two considers ruin photography in photobooks of the period 1945-50. It examines how the ruins were represented within various local and national frames of reference. The comparative element here entails the evaluation of meaningful similarities and differences between local and national self-representation in books of ruin photography. It is a comparative history following the definition offered by Deborah Cohen and Maura O'Connor: 'Comparative history is concerned with similarities and differences; in explaining a given phenomenon it asks, which conditions or factors were broadly shared, and which were distinctive.'¹²³ Chapter three is a study of the relation between national discourses of reconstruction, focused on the issue of housing between 1947 and 1954, with architectural photography being one means of exchange. In other words, it constitutes an account of a cross-national debate and the cultural exchange across national borders. It is closest to *histoire croisée* which 'looks at the interrelationships between [...] entities, whether nations, regions, towns or institutions'.¹²⁴ Chapter four is a study of how the photography of cities in popular photographic magazines in the period 1949 to 1955 promoted a Western European identity or imagined community. As such, it is a history of the manner in which urban photography contributed to the construction of a transnational imagined community. Chapter five considers the question of intercultural relations projected using urban photography onto an international stage in the early campaigns of UNESCO between 1950 and 1958. By necessity, the comparative element is more diffuse here, making way for a broader cultural history of urban photography within the domain of postwar internationalism, although (as will be argued) one heavily marked by ways of seeing and thinking prominent in Western Europe in the period of postwar reconstruction. The final chapter will draw a number of broad comparative conclusions on the role of in photography in the postwar reconstruction of Western Europe.

¹²³ Deborah Cohen and Maura O'Connor, 'Introduction: Comparative History, Cross-National History, Transnational History - Definitions', in *Comparison and History: Europe in Cross-National Perspective*, ed. by Maura O'Connor and Deborah Cohen (Abingdon: Routledge, 2004), pp. ix-xxiv (p. xi).

¹²⁴ Nancy L. Green, 'Forms of Comparison', in *Comparison and History: Europe in Cross-National Perspective*, ed. by Deborah Cohen and Maura O'Connor (Abingdon: Routledge, 2004), pp. 41-56 (p. 46).

This attention to the agency of urban imagery in the postwar period – its role in shaping ways of seeing and thinking about the city – raises questions about the nature of the account offered here of the function and impact of urban photography vis-à-vis regional, national and transnational debates about urban reconstruction. Burke recently referred to this ‘problem of explanation’ germane to cultural history, expressing concern that new insights regarding the operative force of culture effectively squeeze out old insights regarding the importance of economic, social or political explanations.¹²⁵ In short, in what follows photography is seen to be a vital component of various postwar developments, such as the number of tower blocks built or a developing sense of Western European cultural identity, but it is at no point argued that the medium alone is a sufficient cause to explain the occurrence of such phenomena. C. A. Bayly highlighted a comparable problem of explanation in the field of transnational history: the dilemma of ‘how to “model” change’ across a number of countries subject to a variety of different factors within different timescales’.¹²⁶ To negotiate ‘the risk of flattening out complexity’, Bayly advocates discussion of ‘different “drivers” of change’.¹²⁷ In what follows, it is argued that photography should be considered a key driver in public debates about reconstruction, urban space and everyday life. Chapter two offers a commentary on the cultural significance of ruins as mediated through photobooks and their relation to reconstructing regional, national and transnational communities. Chapter three argues that architectural photography was one of the key cultural conditions of possibility for the phenomenal commitment to the tower block as the solution to the postwar housing problem. Chapter four explores photography’s role in establishing the cultural plausibility of a Western European community. Chapter five addresses the instrumentalisation of culture – particularly that of Western European ‘civilisation’ – through photography by UNESCO. Such historical claims obviously do not address factors accounting for the broad sweep of postwar political or economic history. They do, notwithstanding, productively illuminate the central function of photography in pivotal phenomena of postwar social and cultural history including the various regional, national and transnational imagined spaces, communities and futures pertinent to the self-conscious reconstruction effort.

¹²⁵ Peter Burke, ‘Strengths and Weaknesses of Cultural History’, *Cultural History*, 1 (2012), 1–13 (p. 5).

¹²⁶ C. A. Bayly and others, ‘AHR Conversation: On Transnational History’, *American Historical Review*, 111 (2006), 1440–1464 (p. 1449).

¹²⁷ Bayly and others, 1440–1464 (pp. 1449–50).

Between VE Day and the 1960s, lay a difficult period of recovery for Europe's cities and citizens. The destruction and reconstruction of urban space is of central importance to this social, political and cultural history, since each nation's attitude to its past and vision of its future were inscribed in the cities rebuilt in the postwar years. By the early 1960s, things looked, felt and were very different. Culture, politics, society, economics, even the geography changed with the process of decolonisation and its attendant redrawing of national borders. Judt emphasised the visibility of the war's impact, recalling the many images of ruined cities that define that time in popular memory: 'Ruined cities were the most obvious – and photogenic – evidence of the devastation, and they came to serve as a universal visual shorthand for the pity of war.'¹²⁸ Visibility was also a striking characteristic of the postwar reconstruction. The city was both an arena for and a marker of many of the changes of the period. Judt provided a chilling catalogue of the war's human cost which must not be forgotten. In charting the recovery of the postwar years, he narrated a nuanced picture of the shattered continent. This present study – relating to the historical issues, exploiting the theoretical insights, and mobilising the interdisciplinary concepts outlined above – will take a different approach, moving beyond the use and conception of photography as a 'universal visual shorthand'. It responds instead to Mitchell's assertion that, 'Blunt, commonsense declarations about the illusory character of images will simply not do. We need instead a method that recognizes and embraces *both* the unreality of images *and* their operational reality.'¹²⁹ What this study argues for – rather than the distillation of past events into a few iconic images or the denunciation of such images – is research into the original circulation and role of such images. It will identify and interpret the differences and similarities between the discourses in which photographs circulated in Britain, France and West Germany in the period and, by doing so, consider the important question of how photography was not simply an illustration in debates about reconstruction, but fulfilled a formative role in constructing architectural discourse and the urban projects which came to define city life in the second half of the twentieth century.

¹²⁸ Judt, *Postwar*, p. 16.

¹²⁹ W. J. T. Mitchell, *Cloning Terror: The War of Images, 9/11 to the Present* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2011), p. xviii.

Chapter 2: Figures Amid the Rubble: Ruin Photobooks in the First Years of Postwar Recovery, 1945-49

Today it is hard to form an even partly adequate idea of the extent of the devastation suffered by the cities of Germany in the last years of the Second World War, still harder to think about the horrors involved in that devastation.

W. G. Sebald, *On the Natural History of Destruction*¹

Regardless of the controversy surrounding Sebald's claim, originally articulated in the Zurich lectures of 1997, that postwar German 'literature of the ruins' (*Trümmerliteratur*) self-consciously avoided the task of trying to record or express the extent or horror of that devastation, his opening comments hold true. It is a difficult psychological task to imagine the level of destruction from the bombing war and its impact on individuals in Germany. Yet, whether or not German writers chose to commit themselves to this task, it is no way clear that literature can bear the weight of responsibility that Sebald looked to place on it. As Susanne Vees-Gulani notes, 'Events such as the bombings, which lie completely outside of normal human experience, can never be fully conveyed through writing.'² Literature can provide insights or moving details, but of course the reader is always at a remove from the issues conveyed by writing. In uncritical moments, we might assume that photographs can reveal more of the destruction and the plight of those caught up in it than written accounts. But while the air war had an extraordinarily material and visual impact on towns and cities across France, Britain and Germany, the visual mediation of such a phenomenon – whether by war artists or by photographers – provides no greater guarantee of a more faithful or clear representation.

The value of the visual to historical narratives is a central concern of Sebald's discussion. He addressed the impossible burden which the written word is asked to

¹ W. G. Sebald, *On the Natural History of Destruction*, trans. by Anthea Bell (London: Hamish Hamilton, 2003), p. 3.

² Susanne Vees-Gulani, 'The Experience of Destruction: W. G. Sebald, the Airwar, and Literature', in *W.G. Sebald: History, Memory, Trauma*, ed. by Scott Denham and Mark McCulloh (Berlin: W. de Gruyter, 2006), pp. 335–349 (pp. 348–9).

bear, illustrating his discussion with a number of photographs. He described the host of clichés which many eyewitness accounts fell back on as ‘really no more than a gesture sketched to banish memory’.³ Language, in such instances, becomes as much a device of obfuscation as revelation. Sebald went on to argue for the contribution that could be made by those not present: ‘The accounts of individual eyewitness, therefore, are of only qualified value, and need to be supplemented by what a synoptic and artificial view reveals.’⁴ Offering an example of such a textual reconstruction, he describes Operation Gomorrah and its impact on Hamburg in 1943. This powerful evocation combines a wealth of information and striking details through the comments of observers and the author’s synoptic view. Yet ultimately, the account retains a sense of the fallibility of individual memory. The discussion of Hamburg’s destruction segues into that of Cologne and the chapter ends with an open-ended comment in lieu of a conclusion. Sebald recalls a discussion he reportedly had over a decade previously with Lord Zuckerman regarding the latter’s postwar visit to Cologne: ‘All that remained in his mind was the image of the blackened cathedral rising from the stony desert around it, and the memory of a severed finger that he had found on a heap of rubble.’⁵ The eyewitness testimony and the synoptic view do not synthesise into a comprehensive account. This irresolution of the narrative is reflected in the image and the memory in Zuckerman’s mind. The ‘image of the blackened cathedral’ is a wide-angle view, familiar from a dozen famous photographs; the finger, a close-up. In Sebald’s sentences, these two elements co-exist but are not connected; in the narratives of the bombing war – the suggestion seems to be – the panoramic view and the detailed shot can only be ranged alongside each other, never combined to produce a complete picture.

In the course of the description of Operation Gomorrah, a photograph is reproduced. Uncaptioned, it is clearly from a book or magazine. The join between the two pages is obvious, but what is depicted in it is not so clear. Given the text on the pages before and after, the assumption is that it shows the charred remains of dozens of Germans killed by the firestorm following a bombing raid. The lack of specificity regarding both the source of the image and the scene which it captures form part of

³ Sebald, p. 25.

⁴ Sebald, p. 26.

⁵ (Sebald, p. 32). Zuckerman was Scientific Director of the British Bombing Survey Unit and wrote the overall conclusion for the official report on the bombing war, interrogating Albert Speer as part of his research.

what Carolin Duttlinger has termed Sebald's 'metacritique about photographic reception and utilisation'.⁶ Sebald's reconstruction is an assemblage of textual and visual fragments which reflect off each other, mirroring and reproducing ambiguities, rather than being synthesised or resolving into a total view. Ranged alongside this 'combination of panoramic overview and graphic close-up abstracts from individual experience'⁷ are the grainy black and white photographs, the significance of which the reader tries to ascertain from the uncertain suggestions of the accompanying text. Sebald's reflections on eyewitness accounts, textual reconstructions and photographic representations highlight a vital insight for any consideration of ruin photography. Such imagery is not a transparent window on lived experience, but sensitivity to the manner in which photographs were mobilised and framed can highlight the way in which damage was conceived and the ruins contemplated. The ruin photography of the years 1945 to 1949 – a period in which reconstruction was slow to start, and new tensions and ties emerged between former Allies and adversaries – was preoccupied with questions of memory regarding the war and what had preceded it. Ruin photobooks sought to shape the symbolism of war damage and, in doing so, to direct shared memories through cultural artefacts and to shore up or reshape imagined communities for the postwar moment. This chapter compares a range of distinct memorial discourses from the three countries, examining the relation between the local and national circulation of ruin imagery and evaluating complementary and seemingly contradictory ways of framing war damage. It will explore ways in which ruin photography was variously enmeshed in the postwar challenges of national recovery and reconciliation.

While ruin photography circulated in many forms, what follows will focus on the publication of ruin photographs in books. Photobooks were an important site at which individual and collective memories interacted, and significance and meaning are negotiated. Arguably, unlike the more transient or throwaway forms of the newspaper or magazine, books are a corollary of architecture as a cultural artefact invested with memory: like buildings, books are preserved and valued with recognition of this function in mind. Ruin photobooks of the period promote certain ways of viewing the ruins, emphasising specific aspects and excluding others, and thereby promote points

⁶ Carolin Duttlinger, 'A Lineage of Destruction? Rethinking Photography in *Luftkrieg und Literatur*', in *W. G. Sebald and the Writing of History*, ed. by Anne Fuchs and J. J. Long (Würzburg: Köningshausen and Neumann, 2007), pp. 163–177 (p. 165).

⁷ Duttlinger, pp. 163–177 (p. 172).

of view on issues such as national identities and myths. Discussing the attitude to ruins in postwar Berlin, Wolfgang Schivelbusch outlines two different positions:

To the historical-romantic gaze, it appeared as a field of wreckage of antique greatness, timeless like the Forum Romanum. Viewed in a modern-surrealistic way, on the other hand, one could see in the image of shattered houses and ruined streets not eternal transience, but the slain victims of a destruction still recent and reeking.⁸

A consideration of ruin photobooks in Britain, France and Germany will show that while these two opposing perspectives were important, the immediate postwar period witnessed a more complex and varied set of attitudes and debates regarding the ruins resulting from the air war.

In Britain, France and Germany, ruin photobooks were published which addressed local and national imagined communities, and which offered specific perspectives on the past and on the future. Each style of ruin photobook, with its attendant modes of representing the ruins, promoted particular ways of looking at and thinking about urban space to these audiences. Two principal publishing formats are evident in postwar ruin photobooks from each of the three countries: large format books with high production values, often hardback, sometimes part of a series and always focused on architectural heritage deemed prestigious; and smaller publications, often printed in landscape, invariably with soft covers, and encompassing a greater variety of building types including domestic and vernacular architecture. Within this broad distinction of two formats, representative examples of significant genres of ruin photobooks have been selected from each of the three comparator nations for analysis and comparison. The various representative strategies evident in the photographs and the ways of framing the ruins offered by the captions and accompanying text will be the primary subject of this comparative analysis of the different ways in which audiences were addressed, cultural memory shaped and imagined communities promoted.

⁸ Wolfgang Schivelbusch, *In a Cold Crater: Cultural and Intellectual Life in Berlin, 1945-1948* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998), pp. 18–9.

2.1 *Remembrance, Romanticism and Reinvention: Diverging Discourses and Converging Concerns in British Ruin Photobooks*

The German bombing of British cities – particularly London – remains something of a national obsession in the United Kingdom. The seventieth anniversary of the Blitz in September 2010 provided a further opportunity for British news programmes to air ‘rediscovered’ colour cine-film footage of London in 1940 and journalists to interview survivors of the raids on Coventry. Public perception of the Blitz as it happened and in subsequent decades has been the focus of much popular and academic debate, often illustrated with Herbert Mason’s image of St Paul’s. From Angus Calder’s *The Myth of the Blitz* (1991) to Mark Connelly’s *We Can Take It!* (2004) and beyond, analysis has tended to focus on the relation of perceptions and representations of the Blitz to the events themselves, or the centrality of these perceptions and representations to morale in wartime and national identity in the latter half of the twentieth century.⁹ It has not in the main considered the relation between the ruins, their photographic representation and postwar ways of thinking about urban space and reconstruction. The following analysis will look at photobooks as a site of negotiation regarding the significance and value of the ruins in postwar Britain. The mythologizing of British determination and anti-triumphalism which has persisted into the twenty-first century, it will be argued, is evident in publications of the first postwar years. Moreover, these notions of resilience and modesty connect the specific ways of remembering wartime bombing and of thinking about the postwar future which these publications worked to promote through images of the ruins.

Ruin photography quickly established itself as a successful mode of book publishing in Britain during the war. Photographs by Bill Brandt, Bert Hardy and George Rodger circulated in the newspapers and magazine of the period, but they also featured in the more enduring publication format of the photobook. Country Life published *Britain under Fire* (1941) with a foreword by J. B. Priestley; fifty-two Blitz photographs by Cecil Beaton were published as *History Under Fire* (1941); *Grim Glory: Pictures of Britain under Fire* (1941, fig. 2.1.1) featured 22 photographs by Lee Miller

⁹ Angus Calder, *The Myth of the Blitz* (London: Pimlico, 1992); Mark Connelly, *We Can Take It!: Britain and the Memory of the Second World War* (Harlow: Pearson Longman, 2004).

and used Mason's photograph on its cover.¹⁰ Photographs reproduced in these and other similar books have proved a vital resource for the workings of cultural memory regarding the bombing campaign against Britain. They have been continuously re-circulated, reinterpreted or simply recycled. An investigation of how such photographs journey across publications and decades – a process Elizabeth Edwards and Janice Hart have termed 'the social biography of image content'¹¹ – would be rewarding in the case of such iconic images. However, analysis here will focus on the circulation of ruin photography in the immediate period of postwar reconstruction, long before these photographs were recuperated and re-circulated on museum walls or in coffee table books. It will address the function of these images in the immediate postwar years, when debate about reconstruction was booming but the physical task of rebuilding had yet to gain momentum. The three principal publications are J. M. Richards' *The Bombed Buildings of Britain* (1947), *Hitler Passed This Way* (1945) published by the London Evening News, and *Pictures from the Post* (1945), the annual of the *Liverpool Daily Post & Echo*.

J. M. Richards' *The Bombed Buildings of Britain* (fig. 2.1.2) is a good example of the continuity between the wartime and postwar circulation of ruin photographs.¹² First published in 1942 and reprinted in 1943, Richards' book was based on wartime reports in the *Architectural Review*. It was re-issued in an expanded edition in 1947, covering not only the towns of the Blitz (like Liverpool, Coventry, Plymouth, Bristol, Portsmouth, Hull and London), but also those of the so-called Baedeker Raids (such as Bath, Exeter, Norwich, Canterbury and York), and including photographs of the damage by flying and rocket bombs in the final year of conflict. Bearing an archaic subtitle about the 'architectural casualties' inflicted by the war, *The Bombed Buildings of Britain* also included an introduction by Richards (architectural critic and editor of the *Architectural Review*) and notes on the individual buildings by John Summerson (architectural historian and co-ordinator of the photographic records made following the

¹⁰ J. B. Priestley, *Britain Under Fire* (London: Country Life, 1941); James Pope-Hennessy, *History Under Fire: 52 Photographs of Air Raid Damage to London Buildings, 1940-41* (London: Batsford, 1941); Ernestine Carter, *Grim Glory: Pictures of Britain Under Fire* (London: Lund Humphries, 1941).

¹¹ Elizabeth Edwards and Janice Hart, 'Introduction: Photographs as Objects', in *Photographs Objects Histories: On the Materiality of Images*, ed. by Elizabeth Edwards and Janice Hart (Abingdon: Routledge, 2004), pp. 1–15 (p. 5).

¹² J. M. Richards, *The Bombed Buildings of Britain: Second Edition, Recording the Architectural Casualties Suffered During the Whole Period of Air Bombardment, 1940-45*, 2nd edn (London: Architectural Press, 1947).

wartime establishment of the National Buildings Record). In a foreword, Richards outlined two purposes for the book: 'to provide an obituary notice and a pictorial record'.¹³ The strangely anthropomorphic implication of the first aim – a rhetorical strategy also evident in the book's subtitle – was common amongst ruin photobooks. This anthropomorphism of architecture will be considered in greater detail later in reference to other publications which, like Richards', leave largely unarticulated or unrepresented the human cost of the air war. What will be tackled first is the romantic notion inherent in the other aim outlined in the foreword – that of making a 'pictorial record' of the ruins.

The nature of the 'pictorial record' which Richards seeks to achieve is not simply photographic documentation in the "salvage paradigm" of representation,' as Kitty Hauser has termed the use of photography by the preservation movement.¹⁴ It is not simply a matter of recording as clearly, precisely and comprehensively as possible the buildings damaged. It is rather the representation of the ruins as aesthetic artefacts in their own right. Richards refers to 'the aesthetic of destruction' and 'the architecture of destruction' – notably not the destruction of architecture. He defines his intentions for the book in greater detail when he describes, 'the pictorial aspect of bomb damage, the interest we take in the ruins for their own sake'. Thus, the 'pictorial record' aimed at is not simply a record in pictures; it is the capturing of the imputed 'pictorial aspect' of ruination. Such an aesthetic appreciation by what Richards terms 'the connoisseur of the ruins' was not novel in the postwar period, of course.¹⁵ Reflecting on the sublime, Edmund Burke asserted in 1757, that, 'When danger or pain press too nearly, they are incapable of giving any delight, and are simply terrible; but at certain distances, and with certain modifications, they may be, and they are delightful'.¹⁶ Richards' foreword works to present the ruins of bombing raids through this romantic paradigm – as awesome features of the urban landscape. Indeed, Richards refers explicitly to the ruins 'romantic appeal' and their 'intensely romantic character'.¹⁷ *The Bombed Buildings of Britain* seeks to enact the modification and provide the distance for the viewer which Burke diagnosed as a precondition of the sublime:

¹³ J. M. Richards, p. 7.

¹⁴ Kitty Hauser, *Shadow Sites: Photography, Archaeology, and the British Landscape, 1927-1951* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), p. 4.

¹⁵ All quotations are from Richards' foreword (J. M. Richards, pp. 7–8).

¹⁶ Edmund Burke, 'The Sublime: Of Delight and Pleasure', in *Aesthetics*, ed. by Susan L. Feagin and Patrick Maynard (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), p. 325.

¹⁷ J. M. Richards, pp. 5 & 7.

[...] the scarified surfaces of blasted walls, the chalky substance of calcined masonry, the surprising sagging contours of once rigid girders and the clear siena colouring of burn-out brick buildings, their rugged cross-walls receding plane by plane, on sunny mornings in the City.¹⁸

Talk of light, of colour, of texture and of planes all evoke the discourse of art history. Richards, as knowledgeable guide, interprets the ruined buildings using this rarefied vocabulary of art history, offering the photobook's audience a new, aestheticised way to regard and to think about the ruination of city space.

This framing of the image achieved by the connoisseur's interpretation is also the visual motif used by the frontispiece photograph (fig. 2.1.2). Through the frame of a bomb-damaged doorway and the smoke still rising from the rubble is seen a tower of St Paul's Cathedral. Comparable to Richards' framing of ruins with the vocabulary of art history, this literal act of framing the ruins privileges the aesthetic appreciation of ruins and their 'pictorial aspect' over the photograph as mere document. Moreover, opposite this photograph is a reproduction of a drawing by John Piper of another ruin, again emphasising aesthetic concerns. This notion of the ruin's appeal to a romantic sensibility was also voiced during the war in *Bombed Churches as War Memorials* (1944).¹⁹ In an essay titled 'Ruins for Remembrance', Hugh Casson argues that the 'strange beauty' of ruins could act as an eloquent reminder of 'the ordeal through which we passed.'²⁰ From a distance of seventy years, the use of this sort of language to describe the ruins and gap sites may not seem that striking. Ruins from the war were preserved in all three nations and the cultural legacy of eighteenth-century romanticism is still felt and appreciated in Britain, as in other countries.²¹ However, familiarity should

¹⁸ J. M. Richards, p. 8.

¹⁹ The pamphlet elaborated on an idea first outlined in a letter to *The Times* in August 1944 by Kenneth Clark, T. S. Eliot, John Maynard Keynes, H. S. Goodhart-Rendel and others (*Bombed Churches as War Memorials*, ed. by Hugh Casson (Cheam: Architectural Press, 1945), pp. 5–22).

²⁰ Hugh Casson, 'Ruins for Remembrance', in *Bombed Churches as War Memorials*, ed. by Hugh Casson (Cheam: Architectural Press, 1945), pp. 15–23 (p. 23).

²¹ The most renowned examples are the ruins of Oradour-sur-Glane, Coventry Cathedral and Berlin's Kaiser Wilhelm Gedächtniskirche (see Sarah Farmer, *Martyred Village: Commemorating the 1944 Massacre at Oradour-Sur-Glane* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999); Louise Campbell, *Coventry Cathedral: Art and Architecture in Post-War Britain* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996); Stephanie Warnke, 'The Cold War of City Landmarks: Architecture and the Media in Berlin, 1950-70', in *Imagining the City: The Politics of Urban Space*, ed. by Christian Emden, Catherine Keen and David Midgley, 2 vols. (Oxford: Peter

not obscure the significance that such a mediation of the ruins instantiates. The controversy caused by the description of the World Trade Centre attack as 'Lucifer's greatest work of art' by composer Karlheinz Stockhausen suggests what is at stake in an aesthetic response to ruins associated with death and suffering.²² In wartime Britain, as in New York after 11 September 2001, the photography of ruins was forbidden without a permit.²³ The ruins caused by air raids were politically and culturally charged objects the significance of which persisted in the postwar period. Richards was unambiguous in advancing the case for preserving examples of the war ruins, stating that 'a few of the bomb-wrecked buildings might well be left as permanent ruins – not, one hastens to add, as object-lessons for future war-mongers or for any other moral purpose – but for the sake of the intensely evocative atmosphere they possess in common with all ruins, which gives them an architectural vitality of their own; and frankly their beauty.'²⁴ Such explicitly aesthetic terms were potentially controversial, prioritising as they did romantic beauty in the urban environment over the loss of life which the ruins could equally be said to symbolise.

So, what is the effect of this strategy of viewing the ruins through a romantic prism? Hauser has explored the visual culture – and in particular the function of photography – in the Neo-Romantic movement in Britain between 1927 and 1955. She examined the interest in a historical perspective amongst this diverse collection of individuals, noting in particular the 'sense of the city as a palimpsest revealed by aerial bombardment'.²⁵ This historical sense is articulated in the foreword to *The Bombed Buildings of Britain* and the associated romantic vision of ruins as 'the apotheosis of the past' has a bearing on ways of thinking about the task of reconstruction. As the ruins of preceding eras give form or expression to civilisations now lost, Richards suggests, the same will be true of the war ruins for future generations: 'To posterity they will effectually represent the dissolution of our pre-war civilisation as Fountains Abbey does the dissolution of the monasteries.'²⁶ In the framework provided for the appreciation of

Lang, 2006), II, 263–286). Chapter three will examine the role of 'the picturesque' in postwar debates about town planning in Britain.

²² Cited by W. J. T. Mitchell, *What Do Pictures Want?: The Lives and Loves of Images* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005), pp. 18–19.

²³ John Summerson, *50 Years of the National Buildings Record, 1941-1991* (London: Royal Commission on the Historical Monuments of England, 1991), p. 5.

²⁴ J. M. Richards, p. 7.

²⁵ Hauser, p. 243.

²⁶ J. M. Richards, p. 7.

the ruins, they do not represent simply the trials of the period 1939-45. They mark a radical moment of fissure between the past (as evoked by the ruins) and the future (as imagined in the task of reconstruction). Richards would preserve these ruins not as a memorial to the war, but as a marker of a change in era. This insistence on preserving the ruins is part of a wider agenda. The 'Neo-Romantic taste for ruins',²⁷ in the hands of Richards at least, is not a benign nostalgia for a lost past; it is a directive and urgent interest in creating the future. *The Bombed Buildings of Britain* offers a view from the future of the postwar moment as a turning point in history. The pictorial record ruin photography offers here not only presents the ruins as aesthetic objects, it invites the viewer to imagine (and even align themselves with) the perspective of future generations who will, it is suggested, view the ruins as symbols of a past epoch. Richards' photobook thus conceptualises the postwar period as a moment of radical departure from the past, promoting this view through the aesthetic appreciation of ruins.

Neo-Romantic ways of viewing and thinking about ruination and reconstruction exemplified by *The Bombed Buildings of Britain* were prevalent and influential in the postwar period, but they did not represent a monopoly on ways of framing the bomb damage depicted in British ruin photography in the immediate postwar years. The photographs in Richards' book are from a broad range of sources, including the wartime Ministry of Information, the National Buildings Record, and a large number of locally-based photojournalists.²⁸ The diversity of sources brought together in that publication points to the important role played by framing devices, like title and accompanying text, which seek to make a unified whole from a diverse collection of images.²⁹ It also highlights overlaps and interactions between different discursive formations. One such discursive formation is the preservation movement which,

²⁷ Hauser, p. 249.

²⁸ I have Robert Elwall, Curator of Photography at the Royal Institute of British Architects who died in March 2012, to thank for highlighting this (Jay Merrick, 'Robert Elwall: Acclaimed Historian of Architectural Photography', *The Independent* <<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/obituaries/robert-elwall-acclaimed-historian-of-architectural-photography-7565624.html>> [accessed 11 August 2012]).

²⁹ There is, of course, always the scope for viewing images against the grain of such framing devices. A destabilising relation between elements of a text can facilitate or prompt this, as can the polysemous photograph which resists the frame asserted by the text. Summerson's captions for *The Bombed Buildings of Britain* are an example of the former. The forensically detailed captions are at odds with the romantic appeal of the ruins which Richards' text eulogises and promotes. Additionally, they are at odds with some of the surrealist images included in Richards' book, such as the photograph of three men perusing the shelves in the ruined and roofless Holland House Library.

spurred on by war damage, worked to create a photographic archive of the UK's architectural heritage. Another is the use of ruin photography by the postwar British press. The commemorative books published by newspapers of the period provide an important contrast to the Neo-Romantic perspective instantiated by *The Bombed Buildings of Britain*. These more populist, souvenir-style photographic publications promoted different ways of viewing the ruins. Yet, at the same time, they also highlight the centrality in the period of concerns such as memorialisation and future-focused thinking.

Hitler Passed This Way (1945, fig. 2.1.3), published by the *London Evening News*, has a central structuring principle expressed in its title. The sole responsibility for the bombing of London is attributed to Hitler, the captions narrating the fate of damaged buildings.³⁰ A considerable number of the captions refer explicitly to Hitler's actions, 'his' bombs or his state of mind. None refer to the Germans as a collective group, by that or any other title. The introduction concludes, for instance, with a summary of the statistics: 'Hitler killed 29,890 civilians and injured [...] 50,497 civilians. Hitler destroyed, or damaged beyond repair, more than 100,000 houses and damaged about 1,650,000 houses.' The captions refer time and again to Hitler's rockets, Hitler's onslaught, Hitler's firebombs, Hitler's carnage, Hitler's flying bombs, and even 'one of Hitler's favourite targets', Royal Chelsea Hospital. This notion of the Führer's personal involvement and responsibility is stretched to absurd lengths: 'In September, 1940, Hitler visited the "Ladies' Mile", Oxford-street, to wreck part of Lewis's great store.' This focus, continuing precedents established in wartime propaganda, can be read as a move to contain antagonism caused by the bombing – it moves memory of the bombing on to resilient Brits and away from the German nation as a whole, placing responsibility squarely on the shoulders of one man.

Another representational strategy of *Hitler Passed This Way* is the juxtaposition of before and after photographs. Setting the ruined sights in counterpoint to the unruined creates an impression quite different to Richards' book. Rather than forging a pictorial record of the ruins, *Hitler Passed This Way* stresses the cost or what was lost during the war years. The historical record of the undamaged building, in tension with the depiction of its ruination or (in many instances) complete disappearance, conjures a distinct sense of loss reinforced by the specific chronologies recounted in the captions.

³⁰ *Hitler Passed This Way: 170 Pictures from the London Evening News* (London: London Evening News, 1946).

The captions note both the history of a particular building's construction and the date of its destruction. These captions display, as did *The Bombed Buildings of Britain*, a repeated emphasis on a historical perspective. Indeed, the first caption appears on the inside cover alongside a cropped version of Mason's image of St Paul's and reads, "The Second Fire of London" / The famous picture of St Paul's ringed with flame, taken from a city roof, by a Daily Mail camera man on the night of December 29, 1940.'

The combination of these two strategies – the insistence on Hitler's personal role in London's destruction and the historical perspective achieved by the juxtaposition of before and after shots working in concert with the captions – is directed towards the memorialising purpose of the publication as explicitly stated in the introduction:

In course of time damage will be repaired and vacant spaces gradually filled. But what Hitler did to London must never be forgotten. It is believed these photographs will help us to remember well, and to pass on our grim, hard memories of 1939–1945 to the generations to come.³¹

Richards' photobook aimed at a pictorial record which sought to capture the 'strange beauty' of the ruins. The function of *Hitler Passed This Way* as a paper memorial to the destruction differs from this romanticising vision, seeking instead to find visual expression for 'grim, hard memories'. But, while the publications of the *London Evening News* and the *Architectural Press* publications represent divergent ways of seeing the ruins, they are not completely divorced from one another. The will to capture and to circulate such images, despite differing perspectives on the subject of ruins, co-exist and contribute to the specific British conception of ruins which was to underpin the reconstruction project. A constellation of concerns – most notably a view of architecture as a visual correlate for the nation's history and an anxiety about forgetting projected onto future generations – are shared by both ruin photobooks.

Another illustrative example is the 1945 edition of *Pictures from the Post* (fig. 2.1.4) – an annual soft cover publication by the *Liverpool Daily Post & Echo* with a selection of images from the previous year. Using a number of before and after pairings which also work to invoke an historical perspective, this reflection is given a more local flavour and personal tone absent from the London publication. In part this is achieved by the mimicking of the family album: the first substantial set of images are three pages

³¹ *Hitler Passed This Way: 170 Pictures from the London Evening News*, n. pag.

of nineteenth century scenes from Liverpool each given a hand written title and reproduced as if mounted by hand on the sugar paper pages of an old album. Later follows a selection of ruin images with the title, 'When the front line was in your street' (fig. 2.1.5).³² These images are literally much closer to home; the imagined audience being the subject of a much more personal mode of address in contrast to *Hitler Passed This Way* which seemed to conflate the capital's experience with the nation's experience. Here Merseysiders project an image of themselves to themselves in contrast to the Londoners who sought to project an image of themselves to others. But *Pictures from the Post* also connects such localism to a global account of the war. The local picture is followed by extracts from the dispatches of the *Daily Post* war correspondent, a timeline of the war and a picture of the German delegation requesting surrender terms on 3 May 1945, titled 'End of the Road'. This yoking of the local and global is achieved using urban space as a metaphor, journeying chronologically and topographically from the front line in your street to the end of the road. While Richards' foreword worked to provide the necessary distance for viewing ruins as aesthetic objects, here the importance of the ruins is brought home.

Notwithstanding different approaches to the ruins as aesthetic artefact or as symbols of local involvement in the global conflict, *Pictures from the Post* and *The Bombed Buildings of Britain* share a vision of the postwar period as an epochal moment. In combination with this local / global dynamic, the *Daily Post* publication draws explicit connections between the ruins of the present and a vision of the future. The cover of *Pictures from the Post* carries four pictures each given a date, including a busy town centre intersection (1893), a ruined row of terraced houses (1941), and a prefabricated house (1945). The fourth image (titled '2045?') is a drawing of a remodelled town centre.³³ Whether coincidental or intentional, this cover is strikingly similar to a popular wartime publication by Ralph Tubbs, *Living in Cities* (1942, fig. 2.1.6).³⁴ The similarity suggests the prevalence of ways of thinking about ruins which linked them not simply with rebuilding cities, but *reimagining* them. This was a way of conceiving the challenge of reconstruction which entailed a view *of the future*, not wholly unconnected with Richards' imagined view *from the future*. It envisaged the

³² A title reprised from the wartime publication, *Bombers Over Merseyside: The Authoritative Record of the Blitz, 1940-1941* (Liverpool: Liverpool Daily Post & Echo, 1943).

³³ A larger, fold-out version of this diagram was attached inside the annual's back cover.

³⁴ Ralph Tubbs, *Living in Cities* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1942). 134,000 copies of Tubbs' paperback were sold (Andrew Higgott, *Mediating Modernism: Architectural Cultures in Britain* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2007), p. 59).

postwar period as an epochal moment. But in *Pictures from the Post* this is also held in balance with a specific view of the past – a local, personal view of history as a force which had touched and remained relevant to people's everyday lives. Such concerns were not just the momentary effect of the war's end, as evidenced the following year in the 1946 edition of *Pictures from the Post* subtitled, '1946 in review, the past in reflection, the future in perspective'.³⁵

These photobooks represent early postwar iterations of the myths surrounding the British victory, including resilience and modesty. *Hitler Passed This Way* reprises the image of the eternal Londoner's grim determination and plucky spirit, while *Pictures from the Post* provides an account of the signing of the German surrender, describing Field Marshal Montgomery's behaviour as 'without the slightest hint of triumph [...] marked by a simplicity which gave it great dignity'.³⁶ This determination and anti-triumphalism could be said to be acted out in the terms of Richards' preface to *The Bombed Buildings of Britain*, wherein the author resolves to find in the ruins both a haunting beauty and a fitting memorial. Moreover, the various invocations of a historical perspective on the one hand, and an eye to the future on the other, illuminate tensions between national and local mediations of the war and its memory.³⁷ From these differences in discursive formations in which ruin photographs circulated emerge a convergence of central concerns in the immediate period of postwar recovery: the pressing question of memorialisation of the past war and the enthusiasm for reimagining city space in the task of reconstruction.

³⁵ *Pictures from the Post* (Liverpool: Liverpool Daily Post & Echo, 1946).

³⁶ *Pictures from the Post* (1946), p. 18.

³⁷ Richard suggested in the first edition of his book that the level of destruction was a badge of pride during the war (J. M. Richards, *The Bombed Buildings of Britain: A Record of Architectural Casualties, 1940-41* (Cheam: Architectural Press, 1942), p. 7). This phenomenon is suggested by the title of another ruin photobook published by a regional newspaper: *Our Blitz: Red Sky Over Manchester* (Manchester: Daily Dispatch and Evening Chronicle, 1944).

2.2 *Claiming Ownership of Loss and Re-appropriating Ruins: Ruin Photobooks in Normandy and Surrealism in Paris*

Britons repeatedly exposed to narratives and images of the Blitz may find it surprising to learn what Lindsey Dodd and Andrew Knapp recently pointed out regarding the Allied bombing of France: 'The death toll, of perhaps 60,000 French civilians is comparable to that of British victims of German bombing (51,500) plus V-weapon attacks (nearly 9000).'³⁸ Of course, notwithstanding this seldom acknowledged parity of fatalities, the postwar situations of Britain and France were radically different. Germany's invasion, the occupation, the Vichy regime, Charles de Gaulle's government-in-exile, the division of the nation and its colonies, collaboration, resistance, liberation, and the ensuing 'purge' – all this, as Henry Rousso observed, occurred during what in peacetime would have been the term of just one government.³⁹ Thus, in France the postwar period required not only a coming to terms with the impact of total war, the loss of family and friends, and the task of reconstruction; the French had also to negotiate the humiliation brought about by occupation, the guilt of complicity connected to collaboration and the divisive tensions between various competing factions who had struggled for France's liberation and now wished to implement their plans for her future. Recovery for formerly-occupied nations, Pieter Lagrou articulates, meant not simply 'material reconstruction and economic growth,' but also 'political restoration,' 'national reconciliation,' and 'the reinvention of national identities'.⁴⁰

In the perspectives they offered on the war's aftermath, postwar ruin photobooks reflect central issues animating French culture of the time, chief amongst which, as Lagrou has noted, was the question of national identity: 'Any study of the consequences of the occupation must take into account the tremendous effort to reconstruct the nation's self-esteem.'⁴¹ Lagrou approached this problem through what he terms the sources of the traditional historian – government archives, records of parliament, newspapers. The resulting work is chiefly 'a social history of the

³⁸ Lindsey Dodd and Andrew Knapp, 'How Many Frenchmen Did You Kill?' British Bombing Policy Towards France (1940–1945)', *French History*, 22 (2008), 469–492 (p. 469).

³⁹ Henry Rousso, *The Vichy Syndrome: History and Memory in France Since 1944* (Cambridge, MA.: Harvard University Press, 1991), p. 5.

⁴⁰ Lagrou, p. 15.

⁴¹ Lagrou, p. 3.

consequences of the Second World War'.⁴² In contrast, this cultural history of postwar urban photography attempts a different approach, closer to Rousso's objective in *The Vichy Syndrome* (1987). Rousso sought to narrate 'the history of the *memory* of Vichy' over the decades, analysing a more eclectic range of sources including films, commemorations, scandals, trials and histories.⁴³ Lagrou and Rousso's differing approaches to studying the persistence of the past in a particular historical present are representative of central debates of methods and sources in writing the history of postwar reconstruction; namely, the manner in which to approach cultural artefacts as mediators of experiences and shapers of ideas, and the application of terminology and vocabulary developed for explaining individual psychological phenomena to group phenomena. Rousso, on the one hand, states that he uses the vocabulary of trauma, symptom and neurosis as a metaphor. But it is a metaphor that has a tendency to escape those who employ it and leave them open to criticism of a failure to differentiate between individual psychology and group behaviour. Lagrou's approach, on the other hand, provides an important corrective to homogenising tendencies which talk of memory and identity without paying sufficient attention to the specificities of group experiences in political, economic and social contexts. But such approaches emphasise the social and political fields and risk ignoring the vital function of cultural artefacts which require interpretation at the level of the text, image or object. Recognising these tensions, analysis must hold in balance the specificities of the published photograph – its caption, framing and visuality – with critical reflection on the broader network of issues which constituted the discursive formations in which photographs circulated. As will be argued, the history of the memory of Allied bombing in France cannot be disentangled from the question of the occupation, allusions to France's pre-war history or visions of the liberated nation's future. These issues fed into the postwar task of recovery in which, as Lagrou asserted, great emphasis was placed on the task of reshaping and reasserting national identity. At the micro-level of the book, ruin photography as a cultural phenomenon can be seen to play an instrumental role in this task and its analysis highlights some of the issues which evaded resolution. In what follows, analysis will principally address Jean Roubier's *L'Art français dans la guerre: Caen* (1945), publications by Normandy photographer Raymond Jacques, including *Rouen et ses ruines* (1945), and Pierre Jahan's surrealist Parisian photobook, *La Mort et les statues* (1946).

⁴² Lagrou, p. 3.

⁴³ Rousso, pp. 1 & 11.

Allied bombing began early in the war, with 292 French dead as a result of attacks on Le Havre and Caen in 1940. It intensified dramatically ahead of the Normandy landings with three quarters of French air war fatalities occurring in 1944.⁴⁴ The bombardment of Caen in September 1944, for instance, left between 2000 and 6000 dead, destroying a third of the buildings in the town and damaging a further third.⁴⁵ Caen was not unique amongst Normandy towns in this, but nor was the experience of towns in Normandy or other devastated areas typical of France as a whole. The manner in which the ruin photobooks tackle both the intensity and disparity of this phenomenon of unprecedented urban destruction highlights the tensions associated with France's recovery and the reassertion of a national identity after the end of the Vichy regime. *L'Art français dans la guerre: Caen* (fig. 2.2.1), for instance, is a soft cover, large format book of photographs by Jean Roubier, published as part of a series which pictured the destruction of French architectural heritage.⁴⁶

Given the level of destruction and the numbers of dead, Roubier's images of postwar Caen seem strangely depopulated. If human figures are depicted, more often than not they are the forms of damaged statues. This is not unique to the Roubier book but common to a lot of ruin photography, as are the anthropomorphic terms in which buildings are referred to. Richards wrote of 'obituaries' for 'architectural casualties'; the captions accompanying Roubier's images discuss the 'wounds' inflicted on buildings. This anthropomorphism is a correlative of iconoclastic acts of aggression in which buildings – not people – are the principal target. From Kristallnacht to the shelling of the Bamiyan Buddhas, damage has often been not incidental, but an intentional attack on symbolic value. The anthropomorphism in the text of British and French ruin photobooks – the characterisation after the fact of the building *as victim* – highlights the significance of architecture as a vehicle of shared memories or collective identities. Architecture is targeted because of its symbolic value and likewise it is mourned and memorialised, loss serving only to heighten its importance. These related phenomena of iconoclasm and anthropomorphism were not unique to the Second World War and

⁴⁴ Dodd and Knapp, 469–492; Andrew Knapp, 'The Destruction and Liberation of Le Havre in Modern Memory', *War in History*, 14 (2007), 476–498.

⁴⁵ Voldman, p. 346.

⁴⁶ (Jean Roubier and Louis Réau, *L'Art français dans la guerre: Caen* (Paris: Librairie Arthème Fayard, 1946)). Other publications in the series include: Jean Roubier and Marcel Aubert, *L'Art français dans la guerre: Rouen* (Paris: Librairie Arthème Fayard, 1946); Jean Roubier and Maurice Betz, *L'Art français dans la guerre: L'Alsace* (Paris: Librairie Arthème Fayard, 1947).

its aftermath.⁴⁷ In postwar photobooks, such as Roubier's *Caen*, ruin photographs were instrumentalised in a continuing discursive formation which emphasised particular aspects of the preceding conflict and the losses inflicted, thus working to shape memory and identity.⁴⁸

Like the souvenirs or paper memorials published by the British Press, Roubier's photobook also makes extensive use of juxtaposing before and after images. Fig. 2.2.2, for instance, shows the Hôtel d'Escoville 'Autrefois' and 'Aujourd'hui'. Describing the building as one of the best examples of urban renaissance homes in France, the caption gives a painstaking description of architectural detail and of the damage inflicted on the building. The pairing of images in this manner works to emphasise a sense of loss, the stark contrast between past and present highlighting a striking absence. This sense of loss is focused squarely on bricks and mortar. Moreover, the publication works to frame this material and aesthetic loss as a loss to France as a *whole*. The series title presents the town as a work of French art; the caption contextualises the building as a French masterwork; the introduction is written by a Sorbonne professor. In focusing attention regarding the destruction of Caen on the loss

⁴⁷ Nicola Lambourne discussed the case of the University Library at Louvain, Belgium. It was destroyed in August 1914. The Germans were accused of deliberate barbarism and criminality. Rebuilt after the First World War with funds from the United States, its stock included donations from Allied countries. The Treaty of Versailles required the Germans to provide printed books and manuscripts by way of reparations. In May 1940, the library was destroyed again. The Germans accused the British of deliberately starting a fire that could be blamed on them. The British laid the blame with German aerial attacks. As Lambourne noted: 'The damage to historic monuments in western Europe which occurred between 1939 and 1945 did not happen on neutral historic territory or in an attitude-free zone, but was informed by, reacted to and characterised according to already existing conceptions of this aspect of the war' (Nicola Lambourne, *War Damage in Western Europe: The Destruction of Historic Monuments During the Second World War* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2001), pp. 24–27).

⁴⁸ I do not intend to imply here that all damage to architectural heritage during the Second World War was the result of culturally-motivated attacks. This was not the case in the Allied bombing of France – Knapp and Dodd provide a comprehensive analysis of the motivation for such attacks (Dodd and Knapp, 469–492 (pp. 476–486)). However, it is a contested issue regarding British bombing of Germany. Lambourne, for instance is equivocal: 'In the absence of a positive stated Allied policy of bombarding buildings of historic importance in Germany, the strongest impression given is more that of a lack of interest in avoiding them on the part of air forces and governments, *except towards the end of the war, when a succession of historic cities were devastated*' [my italics] (Lambourne, p. 163). Others have not been inclined to be as generous in their interpretation of Allied action, since absence of evidence regarding such a deliberate policy is not the same as evidence of absence. The very name of the Baedeker Raids on Britain suggests a policy of targeting cultural heritage, but there is debate about the origin of this name. Bevan states it was suggested in comments during a press conference by Baron Gustav Braun von Stumm in April 1942, but that Goebbels quickly distanced himself from the comment (Robert Bevan, *The Destruction of Memory: Architecture at War* (London: Reaktion, 2006), p. 78). Lambourne notes that the publisher of the postwar English language edition of the Baedeker guides felt obliged to do the same (Lambourne, p. 199).

of architecture *and* presenting this loss as a loss to the nation as a whole, the photobook pursues a double function. It both works to reintegrate *les Caennais* – with their own specific and devastating wartime experiences – into the body of the nation, and in invoking the concept of a shared loss, it simultaneously conjures up the unity of an imagined community so sorely lacking after the turmoil of the war and the occupation.

In the specific framing of these ruin photographs the concept of national unity is promoted through the invocation of a shared national culture. Comparisons could be drawn with the rhetoric of De Gaulle's speech at the Hôtel de Ville on 22 August 1944 after the liberation of Paris, wherein he sought to forge a national unity through the invocation of a national struggle with reference to an anthropomorphised urban centre:

Paris humiliated! Paris broken! Paris martyred! But Paris liberated! Liberated by itself, liberated by its own people with the help of the armies of France, with the support and the aid of the whole of France, of the France that fights, of the only France, of the true France, of eternal France.⁴⁹

Both can be seen as gestures aimed in part at the reconciliation of a recently divided nation through a shared sense of loss on the one hand and a shared sense of triumph on the other.

Such a strategy – to draw sparingly from Rousseau's metaphoric use of Freudian vocabulary – could be described as an effort to generate a screen memory. That is, a memory 'which owes its value as a memory not to its content but to the relation existing between that content and some other, that has been suppressed'.⁵⁰ Here the notion of something inalienably French to be found in the nation's provinces (a 'deep France' or *la France profonde*) is superimposed over the lived experience of *les Caennais*.⁵¹ The

⁴⁹ 'Paris outragé! Paris brisé! Paris martyrisé! Mais Paris libéré! Libéré par lui-même, libéré par son peuple avec le concours des armées de la France, avec l'appui et le concours de la France tout entière, de la France qui se bat, de la seule France, de la vraie France, de la France éternelle' (Charles de Gaulle, *Discours et messages, 1940-1946* (Paris: Éditions Berger-Levrault, 1946), p. 477).

⁵⁰ Sigmund Freud, 'Screen Memories', in *The Freud Reader*, ed. by Peter Gay (London: Vintage, 1995), pp. 117–126 (p. 128).

⁵¹ Francois Denoyelle considers the notion of *la France profonde* in reference to other modes of postwar photobook in her essay, François Denoyelle, 'De la commande à l'œuvre: Les

ruins as presented here are not a testimony to what the town endured. Rather, focusing on architectural heritage, they work to cover over the memory of this recent past, evoking a prestigious and lengthy national history through its monuments without reference to the Vichy regime or the Allied bombing of the preceding years. Such a strategy is likewise reflected in labelling the juxtaposed images 'Autrefois' and 'Aujourd'hui' ('Avant' and 'Après' perhaps hinting too strongly at the causal event rather than the more neutral suggestion of the passage of time).⁵²

While the images in the Roubier photobook are framed to inspire national unity through shared patrimony, not all publications operated to achieve the same collectivisation of differing French wartime experiences or to produce the same homogenous image of the nation's struggle epitomised by the rhetoric of de Gaulle. Other photobooks which document the destruction of Normandy towns, such as *Caen et ses ruines* (1945) by photographer Raymond Jacques, exemplify a different approach.⁵³ Jacques' photographs of the devastated Caen (like Coventry, often

photographes illustrateurs à l'ère de l'imprimé', in *La Photographie humaniste, 1945-1968: Autour d'Izis, Boubat, Brassai, Doisneau, Ronis ...*, ed. by Laure Beaumont-Maillet, François Denoyelle and Dominique Versavel (Paris: Bibliothèque Nationale de France, 2006), pp. 35–58 (p. 35).

⁵² Farmer discusses Oradour-sur-Glane in terms of a comparable nationalisation of a specific loss. On 10 June 1944, SS soldiers encircled the town and rounded-up the inhabitants present. They executed the men and locked the women and children in the church before setting it alight, along with the rest of the town. In total, 642 were killed. Oradour quickly became more than a local atrocity; it was made into a national symbol. In 1946, a law was passed by the French parliament which both legislated for the preservation of the forty acre site and its ruins, and the building of a new town adjacent to the old. As Farmer has highlighted, the passing of this law was an act engaged in forging symbols for the newly liberated nation that allowed it to negotiate its past and envisage a future. The preserved ruins were framed as evidence that, like the people of Oradour, all of France had been a potential victim of the occupying forces and a potential martyr, thus sidelining the political complexities of collaboration during the Vichy period. Against this negative past, the new town of Oradour was framed as representing the nation's positive future; its rebirth: 'The framers of this legislation intended for the ruins, as an image of "France which had been ravaged" (*la France meurtrie*), to gather power and meaning from their proximity to the new town which, in turn, would provide an image of "France being reborn" (*la France renaissante*)' (Farmer, p. 30). Oradour lent itself to such appropriations perhaps because the reason for its selection by the German forces was unclear. The town thus provided 'an interesting corollary to the notion of France as a nation of resisters: that of France as a nation of victims, martyred regardless of political choice or wartime activity' (Farmer, p. 58). For examples of how photography was used to memorialise and make known the fate of the town and its people see: René Louis, *Le Massacre d'Oradour-sur-Glane par les hordes hitlériennes* (Limoges: Imprimerie de Brégéras, 1945); Claude Vallière, *Oradour-sur-Glane: Souviens-toi, Remember*, 2nd edn (Lyon: Hélio-Bellecour, 1953). Along with graphic images of the dead, photographs of the deserted streets and soot-blackened walls of the ruined town were an important means of publicising the event, but in the process they contributed to its reframing for a national rather than local audience.

⁵³ Raymond Jacques, *Caen et ses ruines* (Rouen: Liberté normande, 1945).

anthropomorphised as 'the martyred city') were again published as part of a series.⁵⁴ In this instance, it was a series of small, soft cover publications, not much bigger than a postcard, without an introductory essay (just captions), presenting only images of the devastated town (no before and after comparisons).

Unlike Roubier's restrained style which sought to capture architectural details, Jacques' images, more often than not, draw attention to the scale of ruination over any specific building. Noteworthy too is the selection of buildings. While Roubier's images featured uniformly prestigious historic architecture (churches, hôtels, châteaux), there is a greater representation of vernacular and modern structures (shops and domestic buildings). Again, anthropomorphic captions strike a dramatic tone in describing the fate of the buildings. The first caption for a photograph of a ruined street corner reads, 'Bruised by the iron and fire of bombings and artillery, Caen has many wounds like those of the group of houses between Rue St. Pierre and Rue de Geole that you see here.'⁵⁵ Notable in addition to this assignation of victimhood to Caen, is the detail of location provided. This level of specificity is also evident in the final caption in Jacques' *Rouen et ses ruines* (1945): 'From the top of the cathedral spire: Look ... the Rue Grand-Pont, the Seine, the Theatre des Arts, the Rue aux Ours, the Nouvelles Galeries, Rouen and its ruins ...'.⁵⁶ Additionally, the use for captions of a font which resembles handwriting imparts a sense of a family photo album similar to that evoked by the opening pages of *Pictures from the Post* (1945). The format, the allusions to a family album and the inclusion of everyday buildings and street names, all suggest a local or regional market for Jacques' series of ruin photobooks.

Jacques' books on Caen and Rouen are just two examples of many modest publications which presumed knowledge and lived experience of the topographies of the cities and towns represented. These are characterised by a style of photographic representation which avoids dramatic or intrusive aesthetic effects. The direct address to the viewer, the detailed locating of the view in relation to street names, the explicit

⁵⁴ The series certainly included two publications on Rouen. Two further volumes on Le Havre and Lisieux were also mooted, but copies of these were not found during the research for this study.

⁵⁵ 'Meurtrie par le fer et le feu des bombardements et de l'artillerie, Caen présente de nombreuses blessures comme celles du groupe de maisons compris entre les rues St-Pierre et de Geole que l'on voit ici' (Jacques, *Caen et ses ruines*, n. pag).

⁵⁶ 'Du haut de la fleche de la Cathédrale: Regardez ... la rue Grand-Pont, la Seine, le Théâtre des Arts, la rue aux Ours, les Nouvelles Galeries, Rouen et ses ruines ...' (Raymond Jacques, *Rouen et ses ruines* (Rouen: Éditions Normandie, 1945), n. pag).

labelling of what is seen, and the invocation to see: all these rhetorical devices of the captions presume the cities depicted are known to the viewer. Lacking the overarching notion of the nation and focussing on the buildings as known and lived spaces (rather than artefacts in a catalogue of buildings significant to architectural history), they constitute a different approach to the task of representing ruins from that exemplified in a series like Roubier's, 'L'Art français dans la guerre.' For instance, *Ici ... fut Aunay* (1947, fig. 2.2.3) includes a narrative account of the total destruction of the town, images of the ruins and lists of the dead.⁵⁷ Books such as these contributed to more locally-focused memorial practices, the invocation to look in Jacques' book on Rouen being symptomatic of a project to record and bear witness to the destruction of the town as a whole, rather than provide obituary notices for architectural masterworks.

The many examples of these locally-oriented ruin photobooks share a commitment to the testimonial value of the image. For instance, the opening words of *Images du Havre par Will* (1946) read: 'There is no need for extensive texts to explain our disaster. Simple images may suffice to fix our memories.'⁵⁸ Despite the differences between locally- and nationally-oriented publications, a similar conviction is articulated in the preface to Roubier's images: 'It is not without a pang of anguish that we take stock of such a disaster. The documentary photographs gathered in this album show better than any description its appalling extent.'⁵⁹ Yet claims on either part are disingenuous. The local memorial discourses may engender publications more explicit about the lives lost than publications in a series like 'L'Art français dans la guerre.' But in both instances, the textual framing and the style and conventions of the photographs themselves contradict such claims of transparency on behalf of the photographs. The use of these images is instrumental, not evidential. The books of which they are a part are dynamic artefacts of a visual culture which worked to forge an enduring image of the ruins and constitute specific attitudes to the destruction. Notwithstanding their

⁵⁷ (André Paul, *Ici ... fut Aunay* (Caen: Imprimerie de Ozanne, 1947)). For other comparable examples see: *Vire autrefois ... Vire en ruines ...: Cent quatre-vingt-cinq photographies réunies et présentées*, ed. by Michel Delalonde (Vire: n.p., 1946); Will [William Beaufils], *Images du Havre par Will*, 1st edn (Le Havre: Havre-Libre, 1946). The former was published in an edition of only 150 loose-leaf copies, but like many ruin photobooks from all three comparator countries the latter was re-issued in a second edition later in the decade.

⁵⁸ 'Point n'est besoin de grands texts pour situer notre désastre. Des images toutes simple suffiront sans doute à fixer nos souvenirs' (Will [William Beaufils], *Images du Havre par Will*, 2nd edn (Bourg-la-Reine: Baumann, 1949), n. pag).

⁵⁹ 'Ce n'est pas sans un serrement de cœur qu'on dresse le bilan d'un pareil désastre. Les photographies documentaires réunies dans cet album on montreront, mieux que n'importe quelle description, l'effroyable étendue' (Roubier and Réau, n. pag).

stated aim simply to bear witness, they always proposed a specific point of view on the form which remembrance of the just-ended conflict should take.

A different approach to the photographic representation of destruction also operated at the time – one which stressed the poetic, elegiac or artistic capacity of the photograph, over its documentary or testimonial value. Had General Dietrich von Choltitz – known for destroying Rotterdam and razing Sebastopol – not disregarded orders for the city's destruction, Paris would have been another infamous urban 'victim' of the war. As it was, Paris witnessed significant fighting in August 1944 in pursuit of its liberation, but apart from isolated incidents like the bombing of the Renault factories in Boulogne-Billancourt or the fire at the Grand Palais during the battle, it escaped serious damage. Like the renowned photographers of the Blitz, the names of some of those who captured the liberation in photographs – Robert Doisneau, Henri Cartier-Bresson, Robert Capa – are now synonymous with mid-twentieth century photojournalism. As Mason's image of St Paul's has come to stand for the Blitz, the liberation of Paris is often reduced to the visual shorthand of a few iconic images (such as Doisneau's handsome member of the Forces françaises de l'intérieur). There are a number of postwar Parisian photobooks which work to generate a sense of wonder regarding the completeness of its urban streetscape, glossing over previous cycles of destruction and reconstruction such as that initiated by Haussmann in the previous century. But among this raft of Parisian photographs, there is at least one Parisian photobook of the immediate postwar period which sits within the discourses of ruin photography. Although more exceptional than representative, it is an important example of postwar cultural strategies of addressing the occupation of France and its legacy. *La Mort et les statues* (1946) is a collection of images of damaged statues taken during the occupation by photographer Pierre Jahan with a preface by Jean Cocteau (fig. 2.2.4).⁶⁰ Unlike the romance of the ruins which Richards evoked or the art historical detail recorded in the captions and images of the Roubier photobook, *La Mort et les statues* has a distinctly surrealist sensibility.⁶¹

⁶⁰ Pierre Jahan and Jean Cocteau, *La Mort et les statues* (Paris: Éditions du Compas, 1946).

⁶¹ In October 1941, orders were issued to remove sculptures from public spaces under the pretext of using the reclaimed metal in industry and agriculture. (In a re-issue of the book in 1977, Jahan suggests that the metal was destined for the workshop of Arno Brecker who was working on a monument to the Third Reich (Pierre Jahan and Jean Cocteau, *La Mort et les statues* (Paris: Seghers, 1977), p. 57). Jahan took just a few rolls of film of requisitioned statues in a scrap yard that year and, when he showed the pictures to Cocteau after the war, the poet and filmmaker urged him to publish them. The resulting book consists of 23 images with terse, allusive captions by Cocteau.

Commenting on the work of Cecil Beaton and Lee Miller, Hauser has argued that the representation and description of bomb damage as surreal became a wartime commonplace in Britain: 'Everywhere, it seems, in the aftermath of an air raid, were images redolent of Surrealist dream imagery and montage.'⁶² Likewise, Jahan's images focus on the incongruous fragment and conjure a dreamlike or hallucinatory quality.⁶³ Capturing the statues out of context, the images juxtapose within each frame a raft of different symbols and characters – here a centaur, there an eagle; Marat lies dying, Androgyne wounded; alligators writhe and a bull reels. Cocteau's poetic captions multiply possible significations, combining opaque historical allusions and mid-twentieth century aesthetic preoccupations. For instance, opposite the image of a seated figure (the nineteenth century politician, Adolphe Thiers) lying on its side amid the debris (fig. 2.2.5), the caption reads: 'What will happen to him? O marvel! He is far ahead of his time. But the House should be surprised to see him disappear into the VOID.'⁶⁴ And, opposite a close-up photograph of a amputated leg still attached to a damaged pedestal: 'A leg, a naked foot, a STYLE. Here is all that remains of the feasts of the king. The pox put high society to flight' (fig. 2.2.6).⁶⁵ Playing on the manner in which a camera extracts an image from the flow of events and a series of photographs allows provocative juxtaposition, Cocteau's vocabulary helps open up the expressive capacities of the photograph – a strategy aided by the statues being already wrenched from their original, everyday context of the city street.

This book thus reflects a significantly different approach from the testimonial value placed on the photograph in other French ruin photography. The act by the occupying forces of removing the statues represents a mode of iconoclasm akin to the destruction of architecture as a military objective. Culture as a symbol of identity, promoter of myth or means of constituting shared memories, is made the aggressor's

⁶² Hauser cites *Picture Post*, 17 May 1944, p. 11, describing images of Plymouth as 'realities that make the fantasies of Surrealism seem commonplace' (Hauser, pp. 235–6).

⁶³ Jahan's images of fragments of ruined statues constitute a novel take on two examples of 'the marvellous' which André Breton referred to in his interwar manifesto for surrealism: 'The marvellous is not the same in every period of history: it partakes in some obscure way of a sort of general revelation only the fragments of which come down to us: they are the romantic *ruins*, the modern *mannequin*, or any other symbol capable of affecting the human sensibility' (André Breton, *Manifestoes of Surrealism* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1969), p. 16).

⁶⁴ 'Que lui arrive-t-il? Ô merveille! Il est très en avance sur son époque. Mais la Chambre doit être surprise de le voir disparaître dans le VIDE' (Jahan and Cocteau, *La Mort et les statues*, p. 50).

⁶⁵ 'Une jambe, un pied nu, un STYLE. Voilà ce qui reste des festins du roi. La petite vérole met tout ce beau monde en fuite' (Jahan and Cocteau, *La Mort et les statues*, p. 52).

target. As Jahan recalled in 1977, 'With its lifeless streets, its empty pedestals, its billboards in German, Paris truly looked like an occupied city.'⁶⁶ Such acts of visual violence are often met by forceful reactions. A muted example of such a revenge attack is discernable in the title pages of a book of liberation photos, *Paris libéré: 140 gravures* (1944).⁶⁷ Six overlapping images of Paris during the occupation (including obvious visual signs of the German presence such as eagles, swastikas, soldiers, and German street signs) have been crossed out with a thick black line. Resembling a brushstroke, it scores through the images of occupation as if this act in itself brings the era to an end or could erase it from the historical record.⁶⁸ Jahan and Cocteau's book likewise responds to the occupiers' iconoclasm, but instead of an attack on the visual culture of occupation it is an act of reclamation. These statues – which stood in Paris and for Paris – were attacked by the occupiers as symbols of the nation and national identity. *La mort et les statues* reclaims the image of these statues and recycles or recasts them as melancholic, surrealist icons exposing the absurd 'trashing of culture' precipitated by the occupation.⁶⁹

While other ruin publications seem strangely depopulated, *La Mort et les statues* is populated by strange inanimate human forms, at once familiar and disorientating. While other ruin photographs worked to superimpose the image of rubble over other difficult issues, this book inverts that strategy. It takes the ruined cultural artefacts and makes them stand as a symbol for the upheaval and turmoil of the years of occupation and, arguably, the cultural and psychological damage that was their legacy. I assert this reading cautiously since the photobook throws open many potential readings. The text and image work in concert to present an open text that invites interpretation, rather than working to close down meaning.⁷⁰ Notwithstanding

⁶⁶ 'Avec ses rues sans animation, ses socles vides, ses panonceaux en allemande, Paris prit alors son véritable aspect de ville occupée' (Jahan and Cocteau, *La Mort et les statues*, p. 56).

⁶⁷ Robert Doisneau and others, *Paris libéré: 140 gravures* (Paris: Flammarion, 1944).

⁶⁸ Another example is found in *À Paris sous la botte des Nazis*, ed. by Jean Eparvier (Paris: Éditions Raymond Schall, 1944). This photobook provides a visual record of Paris as an occupied city. Two full-page photographs are juxtaposed following the introduction. On the left-hand page, German soldiers are pictured marching into Paris past the Arc de Triomphe. The photograph is captioned 'June 1940'. The second photograph on the right-hand page is captioned 'August 1944'. It shows surrendered German soldiers, hands aloft, being marched by Allied troops past the same historic monument. The second image counters the first, offering a form of visual restitution.

⁶⁹ Martin Parr and Gerry Badger, *The Photobook: A History*, 2 vols. (London: Phaidon, 2004), I, p. 194.

⁷⁰ Steve Edwards has argued as follows, contrasting poetic or allusive uses of language which play on the polysemous photograph and anchoring text which seeks to eradicate ambiguity:

this ambiguity, the alternative approach to the value of the photograph in the discourse of ruin photography is encapsulated in the final line of Cocteau's introduction:

A camera is nothing other than the third eye of the man who uses it. Jahan's album is thus an album of poems. Admirable poems in which the crime shines through even more than in the spectacle of rubble.⁷¹

The deliberate transformation of these ruined statues into surrealist symbols through the dynamic relation of photography and text is a strikingly articulate *symbolic act*, even if the *semantic content* of the act remains ambiguous. This reassertion of poetry in the face of the occupation and its aftermath shares a vital aim with the other examples of ruin photobooks: the promotion through visual culture of a resolution between the deadly war with its ignominious occupation and the postwar present.

As noted above, Lagrou addressed the legacy of occupation through research into government archives, records of parliament and newspapers. Subjected to an interdisciplinary approach, this very different material from the same period reveals a broadly similar set of conclusions. The result of any 'effort to extract homogenously national memories from the continental upheavals of the second world war and its disruptive, fragmented impact on the population'⁷² can only result in an artificial picture of the history of memory in the immediate postwar period:

Each group had to integrate its own experience in a national memory that was itself composed of the various contradictory – often incompatible – experiences of other groups of the population. No

'One way to envisage the difference between "art" and "documentary" in photography turns on this relation to language and narrative. In the main, documentary is a closed form, designed to produce preferred interpretations. As such, images are usually combined with some form of anchoring text that steers the viewer/reader in a particular direction. Photographic art, in contrast, typically abjures words, or employs elliptical text, in order to leave the image open to associations and interpretations. For art, vagueness or ambiguity are often the preferred modes' (Steve Edwards, p. 110).

⁷¹ 'Un appareil de photographie n'est autre chose que le troisième oeil de l'homme qui l'emploie. L'album de Jahan est donc un album de poèmes. Poèmes admirables où le crime éclate encore davantage que par le spectacle des décombres' (Jahan and Cocteau, *La Mort et les statues*, p. 12).

⁷² Lagrou, p. 301.

experience, no memory stood alone, nor could their articulation be understood in isolation from the rest.⁷³

What Lagrou terms the ‘inescapable referential character of group memories’ will reveal itself as one of the central justifications of this comparative approach, as aspects of recovery and reconstruction projects take on a distinctively Western European flavour. But consideration of French ruin photobooks – notably exhibiting greater diversity in approach than their British counterparts – illustrates the dynamic relation which exists between cultural artefacts that work to promote particular memories of recent events. Postwar photobooks prove particularly constructive in the effort to negotiate the relationship between different war memories as they engage in the act of mediating the image of the ruins, one of the most visible and lasting legacies of the violent conflict. In the process, ruin imagery becomes an important cultural force through which it is possible to understand the task of recovery and reconciliation in France and the issues which surrounded it; issues such as disparities between self-consciously local and national frames of reference, tensions between values associated with vernacular structures and with more prestigious built heritage, and abstraction or obfuscation regarding the difficult subject of blame. While 25% of Allied bombing was directed at France,⁷⁴ not one of the ruin photobooks directly addresses this complex issue.

⁷³ Lagrou, p. 301.

⁷⁴ Dodd and Knapp, 469–492.

2.3 *Destroyed Cities Recalled, a Divided Nation Pictured: Cologne, Dresden and wie es war photobooks in Germany*

The postwar situation in the war-devastated cities of Germany was of another order altogether to that in France or Britain. Berlin alone had an estimated 55,000,000 cubic metres of rubble.⁷⁵ It has been claimed that as much as one third of the total British war effort was directed towards the bombing of Germany.⁷⁶ In addition to the legacy of the material destruction, the immediate postwar period saw a massive upheaval of Germans liberated from detention or forcibly ejected from former areas of the Reich. Yet, while the fatalities, destruction, wartime experience or postwar situation in German towns and cities bear scant correlation to those of France or Britain, the ruin photobooks share certain similarities. Publications foreground statues and churches as symbolic gestures in the challenge of representing the ruins; the accompanying texts question the capacity of words to tackle such a task; they deploy various combinations of before and after photographs. Sebald bemoaned a reservation or an unwillingness to address the German experience of the bombing war by writers: 'That silence, that reserve, that instinctive looking away are the reasons why we know so little of what the Germans thought and observed in the five years between 1942 and 1947.'⁷⁷ But consideration of ruin photography as it appeared in postwar photobooks demonstrates that readers and viewers of a handful of books were being exhorted to think about the ruins in Germany. The points of view offered to viewers of these images work to recruit them to specific positions regarding memories of the recent and distant past, as well as attitudes to the future. Nor was this mode of publishing marginal: Hermann Claasen's book on Cologne, *Gesang im Feuerofen*, saw multiple editions in 1947, 1949 and again in 1950; Richard Peter's *Dresden: Eine Kamera klagt an* was originally issued in an edition of 50,000 copies; publications of pre-war photographs of the destroyed cities re-circulated in the postwar era (referred to here as *wie es war* photobooks) appeared in numerous towns and cities.⁷⁸ There was not an 'instinctive looking away,' as Sebald

⁷⁵ Diefendorf, *In the Wake of War*, p. 15.

⁷⁶ Max Hastings cited but discredited the official United States report which suggested 7%. In contrast, Hastings cited A. J. P. Taylor (a critic of the area bombing programme) as asserting that one third of the British national war effort was directed towards bombing (Max Hastings, *Bomber Command* (Basingstoke: Pan Macmillan, 1999), p. 349).

⁷⁷ Sebald, p. 31.

⁷⁸ The figures for Peter's photobook come from, Hans-Michael Koetzle, *Photo Icons: The Story Behind the Pictures*, 2 vols. (Cologne: Taschen, 2002), II, p. 63.

termed it. However, looking at ruins through the medium of the photobook was a complex phenomenon. As in French ruin photobooks, it entailed the negotiation of the recent past through specific mediations.

People living ‘amongst the dead cities of Germany’ were constantly confronted by the visual legacy of the destruction.⁷⁹ The photobooks of the time present this visual phenomenon within specific frames or through particular prisms. Occupation followed regime change and books, like many aspects of life, were subject to licensing from the four occupying powers. The existence of licensing requirements placed on publishing undercuts Sebald’s argument about a purely self-imposed taboo on the question of the air war. The failure to address this issue, as Wilfried Wilms has noted, results in ‘rather selective historiography’ on Sebald’s part.⁸⁰ But nor does licensing argue for a purely top-down model of understanding postwar German cultural production. Further factors affecting the discursive formations in which postwar ruin photobooks circulated include the mobilisation by the Allies to document and proclaim their victory (for instance, Yevgeny Khaldei’s iconic image of the re-enactment of the raising of the Soviet flag over the Reichstag) and in the task of ‘re-education’ or denazification (*Entnazifizierung*) begun by the occupation forces.⁸¹ It is difficult to discern where political involvement begins and ends in processes of cultural production in postwar Germany. However, this is not the principal concern of this study. Rather, it is to ascertain what function photography fulfilled in debates about postwar recovery – that is, what perspectives on the ruins were promoted by such photobooks through an analysis of representative examples of these publications.

Herman Claasen’s photobook documenting the devastated town of Cologne in West Germany, *Gesang im Feuerofen* (1947, fig. 2.3.1), was published in the same year as an exhibition of his photos, *Die Tragödie einer Stadt* (‘The Tragedy of a City’),

⁷⁹ This quotation is identified by A. C. Grayling from ‘a report prepared by an Allied group assigned to find a suitable venue for holding criminal trials of Nazi leaders’, and used as the title for his book on the legal and moral implications of the Allied bombing campaign. (Grayling, p. 12).

⁸⁰ Wilfried Wilms, ‘Speak No Evil, Write No Evil: In Search of a Usable Language of Destruction’, in *W.G. Sebald: History, Memory, Trauma*, ed. by Scott Denham and Mark McCulloh (Berlin: W. de Gruyter, 2006), pp. 183–204 (p. 201).

⁸¹ James Rolleston, ‘After Zero Hour: The Visual Texts of Post-War Germany’, *South Atlantic Review*, 64 (1999), 1–19; Dagmar Barnouw, *Germany 1945: Views of War and Violence* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1997).

in the Eigelsteintorburg.⁸² Diefendorf considered the book one of the ‘first attempts at public remembrance’⁸³ regarding the bombing of Cologne, while literary critic Wilms viewed the book as labouring a ‘Christian master narrative’ of redemption and shrouding the immediate past in abstractions.⁸⁴ A brief review appeared in the *Architectural Review* in 1948, suggesting that the most pressing issue revealed by photographs of Cologne’s destruction was the standard of art historical training of American bomber crews flying sorties over Germany: ‘It is a horrible sign of inadequate art education in America that the Cathedral [...] was with so much care and success saved, whereas the dozen or so Romanesque churches, a patrimony greater than that of any other city of the west, were mercilessly wiped out.’⁸⁵ What this absurd comment does usefully highlight is the church as a central facet of Cologne’s architectural heritage and the centrality of churches in the visual record of destruction. A more nuanced interpretation of the book sits between Diefendorf and Wilms’ polarised readings of remembrance and forgetting. The motif of the church amid the ruins illuminates the manner in which this book insists on a particular way of looking at and thinking about the ruins – one which foregrounds a distant past, symbolised by such architectural heritage, over the more recent past.

Like other ruin photobooks, Claasen’s is prefaced by an introduction proclaiming that language can only fail to describe what the images depict. Regarding the introduction, Wilms asserted unequivocally that it ‘cloaks years of bombing and the following reality of Cologne ineradicably. Whatever images may follow, for the interpreting viewer they will point beyond this reality to a Christian master narrative of retribution and redemption.’⁸⁶ In essence, Wilms’ interpretation repeats the textual

⁸² Hermann Claasen, *Gesang im Feuerofen: Köln - Überreste einer alten deutschen Stadt* (Düsseldorf: Schwann, 1947).

⁸³ Jeffry M. Diefendorf, ‘Reconciling Competing Pasts in Postwar Cologne’, in *Beyond Berlin: Twelve German Cities Confront the Nazi Past*, ed. by Gavriel David Rosenfeld and Paul B. Jaskot (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2008), pp. 48–66 (p. 53).

⁸⁴ Wilms, pp. 183–204 (p. 198).

⁸⁵ (*Architectural Review*, 617 (1948), 222). Incidentally, an account of the training that US bomber crews did receive is given in John Steinbeck, *Bombs Away: The Story of a Bomber Team* (New York: Viking Press, 1942).

⁸⁶ (Wilms, p. 198). Wilms is not completely accurate when he states that, ‘The bombing war is not mentioned anywhere. In fact, the reader can find not even the word “bomb.” Instead, he reads of the recent “flood” that came over Babel (Germany) due to the hubris and grandiose presumptuousness of its people.’ Halfway through the introduction to Claasen’s photobook, however, a comment suggests how the images should be viewed: ‘Thus should we look at the pictures in this book. History has become their subject, but not only a history of yesterday and today, not just the history of a single night of bombing or the history of all bombing raids of the

privileging of many photography theorists, stressing the anchoring capacity of words in relation to the image and thereby disavowing the importance of the visual. A loose-leaf, bilingual set of legends is provided for the uncaptioned images in Claasen's photobook. Printed in German and English, these descriptions highlight the fact that in occupied Germany there were many potential audiences for such a photobook, not all of whom would necessarily read or understand the introduction. While Wilms presents a compelling interpretation, it is also possible for the images to escape this attempt to anchor their significance for the viewer. The central role of the church does not necessarily indicate that the ways of seeing the ruins promoted by this set of images all resolve around iterations of a Christian narrative of sin and redemption – no more so than protestations of faith in the documentary value of the image mean that it is free from being instrumentalised, or that the damage wrought in Cologne is a testament to the nature of art education in the US.

There are certain mundane issues overlooked by the unattributed writer for the *Architectural Review*. The solid construction of a building like the cathedral, for instance, ensures a greater chance of survival. There is an element of chance, therefore, which accounts for the centrality of religious architecture. They are by nature of their endurance what Alois Riegl called 'unintended monuments'.⁸⁷ Distinct from intended memorials, Simon Ward has described unintended monuments like ruins as 'a remnant whose previous function has become redundant, but where no new function or use has been established: this allows for the establishment of memory value'.⁸⁸ It is into this gap that the image of the church in ruin photography emerges: an unintended consequence of the air war results in the number of churches and spires remaining in the ruined towns and cities of Western Europe, and the photography of these ruins then circulates in insistent postwar debates regarding how the memory of the war is to be related to questions of local or national identity. The disruption and destruction of the streetscape caused by war opens up architecture to new meanings and

war, rather the history of centuries which the devastation symbolises or at least begins to evoke' (So sollen wir die Bilder dieses Buches betrachten. Geschichte ist in ihnen Gegenstand geworden, aber nicht nur eine Geschichte von gestern und heute, nicht allein die Geschichte einer einzigen Bombennacht oder die Geschichte aller Bombennächte dieses Krieges, sondern die Geschichte von Jahrhunderten, die im Zeichen des Abfalls standen oder doch zu diesem Zeichen auf dem Wege waren'), (Claasen, p. x-xi).

⁸⁷ Alois Riegl, 'Der moderne Denkmalkultus: Sein Wesen und seine Entstehung', in *Gesammelte Aufsätze*, ed. by Wolfgang Kemp (Berlin: Gebr. Mann Verlag, 1995), pp. 139–184.

⁸⁸ Simon Ward, 'Material, Image, Sign: On the Value of Memory Traces in Public Space', in *Memory Traces: 1989 and the Question of German Cultural Identity*, ed. by Silke Arnold-de Simine (Oxford: Peter Lang, 2005), pp. 281–308 (p. 285).

significance, as seen both literally and figuratively in the surrealist imagery of homes during the London Blitz or Jahan's images of dismembered statues.

In this instance, the centrality of the church is as much about permanence (both of the building itself and of a culture) as it is about religion. What Riegl termed their 'age value' (*Alterswert*) is as relevant as their theological significance. While paradoxical, the implication of the images is the invocation to see in the ruins the remnants of a long-standing culture; their significance is not exclusively Christian or spiritual, it is also temporal (figs. 2.3.2 & 2.3.3). Moreover, the photographs provide a view of the town's history which is sufficiently numerous in centuries to reduce the Nazi years to nothing but a small component. Through the mediating form of the photograph the churches take on a value as symbols of tradition or time. They are the unintentional monuments to a historical tradition stretching back over the centuries which, even in its ruinous state, serves to effectively lift the viewer out of the claustrophobic surroundings of the ruins and reconnect them with what historian Ferdinand Braudel referred to as the *longue durée* – time measured in centuries not days. Braudel suggested that such a notion of historical time was particularly relevant to the book as a publishing format, contrasting the *longue durée* with the 'short time span, proportionate to individuals, to daily life, to our illusions, to our hasty awareness – above all the time of the chronicle and the journalist.'⁸⁹ From the initial night-time images of the bombing, which resemble a firework display more than a deadly conflagration (fig. 2.3.4), to the portraits of the statues in Claasen's book (fig. 2.3.5), it is as if the book's audience is being urged to view the destruction through the eyes of these icons. This invitation is reinforced by the repeated juxtaposition of 'establishing shots' of the ruins and 'close-up' shots of the statues. This perspective which evokes the long view of the city's history also is implied in the book's subtitle ('Cologne – Remains of an Ancient German Town').⁹⁰ Crucially

⁸⁹ (Fernand Braudel, *On History* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1980), p. 27). Braudel's essay originally published in 1960, discusses emerging interdisciplinary trends and rivalries in the social sciences. While Braudel discusses here the study of 'mental frameworks' (Braudel, p. 31) across long periods by the historian – rather than the position of the long time span in the mental framework of a given period – his distinction is invaluable in understanding Claasen's book and the attitude to the ruins which it offers.

⁹⁰ 'Köln – Überreste einer alten deutschen Stadt'. This subtitle is also a reference to an interwar book of images mentioned in the introduction by the same publisher: Hans Peters and Paul Clemen, *Köln: Antlitz einer alten deutschen Stadt* (Düsseldorf: Schwann, 1939). This notion of *Antlitz* (face or countenance) is used in the title of these pre- and postwar publications in a figurative sense, but the concept also played a part in the cult of personality that helped sustain the Nazi party, as evidenced by an infamous photobook of Hitler portraits and explored in a recent study, Heinrich Hoffmann, *Das Antlitz des Führers* (Berlin: Zeitgeschichte-Verlag, 1939); Claudia Schmolders, *Hitler's Face: The Biography of an Image* (Philadelphia: University of

then, the hope offered amid the destruction suggested in the book's title, 'Song in the Furnace,' is not simply a matter of Christian redemption, but also cultural continuity.⁹¹

Such a strategy of emphasising the *longue durée* is also seen in a book of photographs of Cologne Cathedral by Karl Hugo Schmölz, *Der Dom zu Köln: 1248-1948*.⁹² Published to commemorate the 700th anniversary of the start of the building's construction, it was a portrait of a national symbol which Rudy Koshar has termed, 'the most important historical church in the German memory landscape'.⁹³ As suggested by the title, this photobook was also history with a wide-angle lens. It is architectural and ecclesiastical history, but it also contributes to the creation of an idea and an image of a culture with a substantial historical tradition – long enough for a dozen years to appear greatly reduced in significance. Schmölz's photographs situate the building in the unavoidable field of rubble (fig. 2.3.6), before moving swiftly to a large collection of elegant compositions focusing on architectural detail (fig. 2.3.7) and thus evoking the idea of a culture both refined and enduring. Diefendorf notes a similar phenomenon in the enthusiasm with which another anniversary was celebrated a few years later: 'As was evident in the pageantry staged in 1950 for the 1900th anniversary of the city's founding, most Cologners did not so much want to forget or conceal what happened under Hitler as to push it aside, to relegate the Nazi years to a relatively small place in the city's long history.'⁹⁴ Schmölz's photobook is then, along with Claasen's, less an act of constructive forgetting than of marginalizing or miniaturizing the Nazi period. Such a strategy is facilitated by the image of the church, as it was in Claasen's book. There was not simply a turning away from the ruins, but rather a very specific and deliberate presentation of them which worked to direct attention, attitudes and

Pennsylvania Press, 2006). Chapter three will consider in more detail the interrelation of notions of the face of the city and the human face in relation to Cold War politics after 1949.

⁹¹ This is not to suggest that religion is irrelevant to these representations, but rather to counter Wilms' over-insistence on the importance of a Christian master narrative. The church also represents a non-political imagined community which is a valuable alternative following the discrediting of the Nazi regime.

⁹² Karl-Hugo Schmölz and Hans Peters, *Der Dom zu Köln, 1248-1948* (Düsseldorf: Schwann, 1948).

⁹³ (Rudy Koshar, *From Monuments to Traces: Artifacts of German Memory, 1870-1990* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000), p. 54). Koshar also considers the debates about the preservation of this national symbol in the interwar period, arguing that the fate of the gothic church in industrialised Cologne became closely associated with the fate of the nation in the early twentieth century: 'preservationist anxiety over the cathedral was a cognate of anxiety over the nation' (Rudy Koshar, *Germany's Transient Pasts: Preservation and National Memory in the Twentieth Century* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1998), p. 128).

⁹⁴ Diefendorf, pp. 48–66 (p. 50).

memories away from the Nazi years, evoking a more extended historical view.⁹⁵ The churches of Cologne are at once what was threatened or damaged and what connects the viewer to the *longue durée* of the past, effectively placing the twelve years of Nazi rule in parentheses and emphasising cultural continuity over and above human causalities.⁹⁶ In this, it is similar to the representational strategies of Roubier's series, 'L'Art français dans la guerre,' focussing on the *longue durée* and evading questions of blame or even of causation. Roubier's photographs create an art historical perspective through the 'before' and 'after' juxtapositions; the same end is achieved here through the evocation of the before in the image of the after.

The figure in Richard Peter's iconic image of Dresden which appeared in his photobook, *Dresden: Eine Kamera klagt an* (1949; fig. 2.3.8) has often been taken to be a religious statue.⁹⁷ Karl Gernot Kuehn, for instance, described it as 'a solitary baroque angel solemnly present[ing] the viewer with the aftermath of Dresden's inferno'.⁹⁸ It is in fact one of sixteen personified virtues atop the tower of the town hall.⁹⁹ The prevalence of religious icons and buildings in the ruin photography of the time explains such a case of mistaken identity. However, rather than an aestheticised perspective or a narrative of fall and redemption, Peter's photobook promotes the politically charged notion of overcoming.¹⁰⁰ Anne Fuchs has argued that Peter's iconic

⁹⁵ There do however appear to have been limits to the instrumentalisation deemed acceptable at the time. A catalogue of the Museum Ludwig in Cologne notes that, 'During the late forties, he [Chargesheimer] and his friend Günther Weiß-Margis planned his first publication about the war-ravaged city of Cologne, but the aestheticized nature of his pictures found no willing publisher' (*20th Century Photography: Museum Ludwig Cologne*, ed. by Reinhold Mißelbeck (Cologne: Taschen, 1996), p. 102).

⁹⁶ This perspective is all the more striking when one learns that, 'Nearly 775,000 people had lived in Cologne before the war, but in March 1945 only 40,000 people remained. The mass of rubble now equated nearly 602 cubic meters per person (a cube 8.5 meters per side)' (Diefendorf, *In the Wake of War*, p. 16).

⁹⁷ Richard Peter, *Dresden: Eine Kamera klagt an* (Dresden: Dresdener Verlagsgesellschaft, 1949).

⁹⁸ Karl Gernot Kuehn, *Caught: The Art of Photography in the German Democratic Republic* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), p. 21.

⁹⁹ The specific virtue is *Güte* (goodness or kindness).

¹⁰⁰ Any contrast between East and West Germany must avoid a simplistic sketch. Political involvement in cultural production was prevalent both before and after the establishment of the two German states. Like licensing, political patronage was relevant on both sides of the divide. Kuehn noted that the *Kulturbund* performed a role in overseeing photography in East Germany (Kuehn, pp. 16–17). Wilms highlighted Konrad Adenauer's support for Claasen's photobook when briefly reinstated as Mayor of Cologne by the Allied forces (Wilms, pp. 183–204 (p. 197)). Schivelbusch has assessed postwar regulation of cultural and intellectual activity in divided Berlin. The interpretation of Peter's photography of Dresden offers an illuminating contrast to different ways of visualising and thinking about the ruins, but this contrast cannot be couched in

photograph of Dresden fits within a romantic tradition which offers ways of making sense of a seemingly unfathomable loss of life and destruction: 'By tapping into the readily available convention of the Romantic ruin, the photograph mobilises a melancholic sensibility that allowed postwar Germans to process the experience [... suggesting that,] although the losses of the past are irreversible, these losses can be made meaningful.'¹⁰¹ This characterisation of a melancholy viewpoint – which, as Peter Fritzsche has asserted, 'redeems individual losses in social narratives' through the appeal to an empathetic audience¹⁰² – could equally be applied to Claasen's photobook on Cologne. In the case of Peter's representation of Dresden, Fuchs' is an accurate and illuminating assessment of the appropriation and recirculation of the iconic image from the town hall tower. However, the cultural work that this one image achieves as it circulated independently over the decades is notably different from that which it achieves with regard to collective memories and imagined communities in collaboration with the other photographs in Peter's 1949 photobook. Fuchs' interpretation of the melancholy perspective offered by the statue in front of the seemingly endless field of ruins does account for what sustained and made iconic Peter's renowned photograph, facilitating the 'hollowing out of its referential quality' and the translation of Dresden's destruction 'into a suprahistorical event without any human agency'.¹⁰³ Arguably, Fuchs' interpretation, concerned with the after-life of Peter's iconic photograph, does not adequately characterise the overall perspective to ruination and rebuilding which the book promoted to its original viewers. An account of this overall position must weigh the factors which distinguish Peter's photographs of Dresden not only from those of Cologne by Claasen, but also the selection of images in Richards and Roubier's photobooks.

The overall tone is set by the subtitle, *A Camera Accuses*. While the poetically-titled *Gesang im Feuerofen* bore a dedication which spoke of remembrance and

the reductive terms of propaganda (in East Germany) and creative expression (in West Germany). As will be demonstrated throughout this study, in the period under consideration, cultural practices from one side continually denounced and defined themselves against cultural practices from the other.

¹⁰¹ Anne Fuchs, *After the Dresden Bombing: Pathways of Memory, 1945 to the Present* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), p. 40.

¹⁰² Peter Fritzsche, *Stranded in the Present: Modern Time and the Melancholy of History* (Cambridge, MA.: Harvard University Press, 2004), p. 208.

¹⁰³ Fuchs, pp. 41 & 34.

warning,¹⁰⁴ the title of Peter's book sets out a more forthright intent. Both books use statues as a recurring motif, but while Claasen's images suggested an invitation to see the ruins as symbolizing a culture stretching back centuries, the statues in Peter's book reinforce (or even perform) the central notion of accusation. The iconic figure on the tower of the town hall appears on the fourth page opposite an image of a serene night-time Dresden, peaceful and undamaged (fig. 2.3.9). Pictured from above against a seemingly unending terrain of ruination the dark soot-stained figure contrasts strikingly with the bleached-out ruins. The dramatic oppositions (before and after, light and dark, serene and desolate) coupled with the open hand of the statue generates what Kuehn (in reference to another image of the book) called 'interpretive innuendo'.¹⁰⁵ It calls on the viewer to answer the gesture of the statue, to engage with the significance of that gesture made clear by the title. This notion of innuendo is constructive since it references both a play of symbolic possibilities and, like sexual innuendo, it highlights the way in which the image carries with it the preferred interpretation despite an apparent lack of explicitness. This suggestive but directed power of the image is exhibited in other human forms appearing in Peter's book. Another oft-reproduced image depicts a skeleton in the pose of someone walking set against the ruin of what could be the Frauenkirche (fig. 2.3.10). Bearing the legend 'Death over Dresden' ('Der Tod über Dresden'), it appears opposite an image of chalk messages scrawled on a wall regarding people lost or sought in the rubble. Again, the dynamic contrasts and the active movement implied have a dramatic effect which, through a collaboration of visual intensity and textual directness, makes clear the accusation of the title.

While the images of the statue and the skeleton perform the act of accusation of the photobook's title, even more striking are the images of the dead amid the ruins, such as the contorted and disfigured faces of a man and woman roughly halfway through the book (figs. 2.3.11 and 2.3.12).¹⁰⁶ As Fuchs has observed, this juxtaposition emphasises that the deaths in Dresden did not 'distinguish between gender, class, ideology or between the guilty and innocent'.¹⁰⁷ On the following page, photographs show bodies being stacked and burnt in the market square. While the circulation of

¹⁰⁴ 'To the dead a commemoration. To the living a warning' ('Den Toten zum Gedenken. Den Lebenden zur Mahnung'), (Claasen, p. vii).

¹⁰⁵ Kuehn, p. 19.

¹⁰⁶ The dead are seldom represented in ruin photobooks of the time, one other significant example being the images which featured six dead soldiers in Raymond Jacques, *La Libération de Rouen* (Rouen: Liberté normande, 1945).

¹⁰⁷ Fuchs, p. 38.

Peter's image disconnected from the other photographs with which it was originally circulated does convey an 'awe-inspiring tragic grandeur',¹⁰⁸ between the covers of the 1949 book it sits alongside graphic images of death, the likes of which were eschewed by the vast majority of other ruin photobooks from all three comparator countries. Peter's photographs, thus, do not simply offer elegant or melancholic images of the ruins. Much more than in Claasen's images of ruined Romanesque churches, the extent and nature of a city's destruction is visualised in Peter's photobook. Peter's selection of images resembles more the photos of Jacques from Caen and Rouen which, directed at local audiences, depicted burnt-out vehicles and shattered homes. For instance, the destruction of Dresden industry is depicted, as well as the blackened façades of the Zwinger Palace. The before and after juxtaposition is mobilised in *Eine Kamera klagt an* to emphasise the violence of destruction more than a melancholy perspective on loss. Another image of statues and icons shows them, not as mute and impassive observers of the centuries, but slain and maimed. The accusation of the title, reinforced by photographs of both the dead and symbolic human forms, contrasts starkly with the books on Cologne which are, like the books of Roubier's images, notably silent on the causation of the ruination, working instead to relativise memory of the previous years by invocation of the *longue durée*.

Another distinction can be made regarding the sense of direction in Peter's book – it includes a visualisation of the future *under construction*, unlike the majority of other ruin photobooks. The focus is on the immediate past, the present and the future, not the *longue durée*. Peter's images include rebuilt schools and factories, and individuals working in and on the new city taking form. Like the statue, the skeleton, and the dead, the living in Peter's images have the effect of heightening the viewer's potential emotional response to the destruction. Images of the dead have the capacity to shock; the images of the statue or skeleton dramatically insinuate questions of blame; the images of the able-bodied Dresdeners rebuilding their town imply an inspirational community overcoming adversity. This movement – almost a narrative arc from destruction, death and accusation, to overcoming and recovery represented by rebuilt theatres, hospitals, factories – culminates with an image of the rebuilt town hall and of a man climbing a ladder (fig. 2.3.13). This final figure can be viewed as a

¹⁰⁸ Fuchs, p. 40.

counter-image to the accusing statue, showing a move away from the past, out of the rubble and towards the future.¹⁰⁹

The yoking together of this symbolic figure with the symbolic seat of the town, the town hall, enforces this notion of identity creation which Niven diagnoses with reference to Peter's book:

In commemoration and books on Dresden in the GDR, the celebration of Dresden's reconstruction followed on from drastic evocations of its ruins and dead. But this sense of having overcome the past was precarious. It was made clear that the Western threat remained.¹¹⁰

The figures amid the rubble in Peter's images work together with the other images of the book to construct an imagined community for the inhabitants of Dresden to identify with – an identity enmeshed with attitudes to the ruins and what will follow them; a celebratory position of triumph in the face of adversity; crucially, an identity shaped in contradistinction to those accused.¹¹¹ An earlier publication on Dresden provides an illuminating contrast which brings into relief the insistence on blame and triumph of *Eine Kamera klagt an*. Kurt Schaarschuch's *Bilddokument Dresden, 1933-1945* (1945) uses some direct before and after juxtapositions which starkly emphasise what was lost.¹¹² Human figures are also used to create heightened emotional impact. A nod to the future is provided with a final image of a muscular reconstruction worker. Perhaps most noteworthy in this publication is the 'bracketing off' of the Nazi years and the bombing war, suggested by the dates of the title. The fascist regime and the Allied bombing are effectively aligned. This was to become a dominant trope of memories of the war in the Soviet-influenced GDR and is amply illustrated by the words of the plaque at the Frauenkirche which remained a ruin throughout: 'To the tens of

¹⁰⁹ Fuchs notes the parallel between the first lines of the national anthem of the GDR and this image (Fuchs, p. 38).

¹¹⁰ Bill Niven, 'The GDR and the Memory of the Bombing of Dresden', in *Germans as Victims: Remembering the Past in Contemporary Germany*, ed. by Bill Niven (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), pp. 109–129 (p. 116).

¹¹¹ The important function of such symbolic human figures is seen also in the figure of the *Trümmerfrau* (women who worked clearing the rubble) who Niven described as an 'icon of post-war reconstruction'. This iconic female features in the images here, in the prefatory poem and also in a statue by Walter Reinhold outside Dresden's rebuilt town hall, erected in 1952.

¹¹² Kurt Schaarschuch, *Bilddokument Dresden, 1933-1945* (Dresden: Sächsische Volkszeitung, 1945).

thousands of dead, and an inspiration to the living in their struggle against imperialist barbarism and for the peace and happiness of man'.¹¹³ Through this dual mechanism of accusation and the depiction of overcoming through reconstruction, a new identity was suggested for the inhabitants of Dresden and the GDR founded on the contradistinction of the GDR and the Western Allies and the conflation of the Western Allies and the Nazi regime.

The name of Dresden has become shorthand for the devastation which resulted from the bombing war against Germany. From the beginning its fate was linked to other key towns destroyed in the Second World War, like Caen, Warsaw, Coventry and Hiroshima. The sheer horror of the firestorm was recorded in eyewitness accounts and in fiction.¹¹⁴ The original interpretations of the destruction of the town provided in ruin photobooks reward revisiting precisely because of the centrality Dresden has assumed in such debates. Published in the year that divisions were formalised, Peter's images of Dresden provide an instructive comparator to highlight the ways in which West German publications avoided issues such as blame (or even more simply causation) that are tackled here in a demonstrably partisan manner. While the ruin photobooks of the emerging East and West Germany shared certain tropes and motifs, these were instrumentalised towards different ends. Ruin photobooks in both east and west wrestled with questions of guilt, loss and identity in an uncertain future, though the answers proffered in response to these problems diverged markedly. As Jennifer Jordan suggested in her discussion of postwar memorials in Berlin, 'The two sides shared much in terms of memorial culture, especially an emphasis on palatable foundational narratives.'¹¹⁵ The finger-pointing, achieved literally and figuratively in Peter's iconic image, and the evasion of the immediate past exemplified by Claasen's book are two sides of the same coin. However, a reticence to criticize does not

¹¹³ Susanne Vees-Gulani, 'The Politics of New Beginnings: The Continued Exclusion of the Nazi Past in Dresden's Cityscape', in *Beyond Berlin: Twelve German Cities Confront the Nazi Past*, ed. by Gavriel David Rosenfeld and Paul B. Jaskot (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2008), pp. 25–47 (p. 31).

¹¹⁴ The Bombing Restriction Committee in the UK, which campaigned against the pursuit of area bombing, published a striking account of the attack on 13 February 1945: 'the tempest of fire blowing from all the side streets was so terrific that it swept people along like withered leaves. Clothing was literally blown from their bodies, and they slid, slithered, rolled many hundreds of yards into the fires, as if they were drawn by powerful magnets. The heat was so desperate that lips cracked, hair was charred and those who were not killed by the collapsing buildings, and who escaped the bomb splinters, were suffocated and roasted in the cellars', (*The End of Dresden by a Swiss Eye-Witness* (London: Bombing Restriction Committee, 1945), p. 8.

¹¹⁵ Jennifer A. Jordan, *Structures of Memory: Understanding Urban Change in Berlin and Beyond* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2006), p. 35.

necessarily mean notions of victimhood are localized to East Germany. A genre of books emerged in postwar Germany which re-circulated photographs from before the destruction, picturing towns and cities from east and west as they were. These *wie es war* photobooks also engaged with questions of loss and victimhood.

Perhaps surprisingly given the defeat and the extent of the devastation, there was a trend to aestheticise the ruins in Germany as there was in Britain. In *Bilddokument Dresden*, one double-page spread (fig. 2.3.14) contrasts a before and after image of two painters. Gavriel Rosenfeld raises the question of ruin romanticism (*Ruinenromantik*), citing an exhibition called *Ruins of a City* in the Munich city museum in February 1949.¹¹⁶ Brad Prager has suggested that, through the motif of ruined churches and skewed crosses, such cultural artefacts reuse images from the same 'iconographic reservoir' as the Romantics.¹¹⁷ However, while a romantic approach was possible it was equally fraught and contested, especially in the field of photography. An article by Heinz Lüdecke in *Bildende Kunst*, comparing the work of photographers Fritz Eschen and Max Baur, criticised the techniques of Baur which made a ruined neoclassical building in Potsdam resemble a nineteenth century photograph of a Roman temple: 'The river is truth; a drop from it can be a lie.'¹¹⁸ To use photography to view the ruins as artefacts for aesthetic appreciation not only drew criticism, but in some instances precluded publication. Herbert List's images of Munich in ruins, for instance, were not published until the 1960s.¹¹⁹ *Wie es war* photobooks, however, were a widespread and seemingly uncontroversial publishing phenomenon in the immediate postwar years despite (or even perhaps because of) the romantic sensibility they exhibited. Re-circulating urban photographs, this prevalent group of books claimed to recreate towns *as they were*.¹²⁰ What they offered were specific ways of

¹¹⁶ Rosenfeld contends that this ruin romanticism was part of 'broader cultural reflex' which had amnesiac overtones: 'Seeing beauty in the ruins necessarily entailed marginalizing the memory of their violent origins' (Rosenfeld, p. 22).

¹¹⁷ Brad Prager, 'Air War and Allegory', in *Bombs Away!: Representing the Air War Over Europe and Japan*, ed. by Wilfried Wilms and William Rasch (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2006), p. 29.

¹¹⁸ Heinz Lüdecke, 'Es kommt auf die Einstellung an', *Bildende Kunst*, July (1948), 12-15; cited by Kuehn, pp. 22-26.

¹¹⁹ See Herbert List, *Herbert List Memento 1945: Münchner Ruinen*, ed. by Ludger Derenthal, Ulrich Pohlmann and Volker Duvigneau (Mosel: Schirmer, 1995).

¹²⁰ These eponymous publications were frequently subtitled, 'as it was' ('wie es war') or 'recorded before the destruction' ('vor der Zerstörung aufgenommen'). For example: Otto Hagemann and Paul Ortwin Rave, *Berlin: Vor der Zerstörung aufgenommen*, 2nd edn (Berlin: Deutscher Kunstverlag, 1949); Edmund Kesting, *Dresden wie es war* (Berlin: Rembrandt Verlag, 1955); Gustav Wais, *Stuttgart vor der Zerstörung*, 2nd edn (Stuttgart: Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt, 1959).

remembering now disfigured and transfigured urban spaces. This mode of photobook reprised a pre-war genre of illustrated souvenir-style publication that was not unique to Germany, but in the postwar context these books took on a charged significance, given their explicit engagement in the acts of memorializing what had been lost. The small paperback, *Berlin: wie es war* (fig. 2.3.15), for instance, is described as a memory book ('ein Erinnerungsbuch') and demonstrates that this publishing practice was not restricted to prestigious editions by art book publishers.¹²¹

Writing in 1911, Georg Simmel discussed the attitude to ruins that was the legacy of the romantic period, speaking of 'the metaphysical-aesthetic charm of the ruins'.¹²² Simmel attributed this charm to the effects of nature's forces on human creations. Roman ruins, he held, were not infused with the same sense of nostalgia, given that 'one notices in them the destruction *by man*; for this contradicts the contrast between human work and the effect of *nature* on which rests the significance of the ruin'.¹²³ Nostalgia, however, is exactly the overriding tone achieved in the recirculation of these pre-war images which stand as an important counterpoint (or counter-image) to the discourses of ruin photography in both East and West Germany in the early postwar years. In an important sense, following the far-reaching destruction, the images of lost buildings and urban spaces became a remnant, a fragment or a sort of ruin in their own right. Like *Ruinenromantik*, this interest in the fragment as an object of aesthetic pleasure is a legacy of European romanticism. Such publications thus sidestep the destruction by man which Simmel felt to be problematic and offer these historical images for contemplation in the same manner Simmel diagnosed ruins were appreciated – as aesthetic objects held to be infused with a certain charm, with nostalgia.¹²⁴

Yet, how are we to interpret the significance of such nostalgic acts of photographic reconstruction represented by a book like, *Berlin: Vor der Zerstörung*

¹²¹ *Berlin wie es war*, ed. by Wilhelm Havemann (Berlin: Anzeigen- und Drucksachen-Werbe-gesellschaft, 1948).

¹²² 'The Ruin' (1911), in Georg Simmel, *Georg Simmel, 1858-1918*, ed. by Kurt H. Wolff (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1959), p. 265.

¹²³ Simmel, p. 260.

¹²⁴ Romantic and surrealist sensibilities constitute two different approaches to the fragment. The former views the fragment as an artefact imbued with historical resonance; the latter, as a vehicle for incongruous and allusive juxtaposition. Those photographs which expressed a surrealist sensibility in the immediate postwar – like List's image of a roaring lion statue in front of a sign reading, 'Drive Slowly' – invariably did not get published in Germany.

aufgenommen (1948)?¹²⁵ Presented in this book were carefully composed and beautiful images of now-ruined buildings (such as the Kaiser Wilhelm Gedächtniskirche, fig. 2.3.16, or the Anhalter Bahnhof, fig. 2.3.17), along with more modern iconic buildings which had largely escaped damage (including Bruno Taut and Martin Wagner's Horseshoe housing development (Hufeisensiedlung), fig. 2.3.18, and the Olympic stadium, setting for the 1936 Berlin Olympics, fig. 2.3.19). Since the images do not reflect the contemporary state of the buildings and ignore the division of the city between the occupying forces, the book could be described as a screen memory or an attempt to reconnect to a more palatable history. Yet the captions listed for these buildings include not only the date of their construction but also their demise. This re-picturing of the city represents a different strategy to that of the ruin photobooks that actively seek to reframe images of destruction and present particular points of view on the ruins. Nor is it most usefully conceived in the salvage paradigm of the various established preservation movements, since it goes beyond the act of simply creating a record or archive. These are images *retrieved* from the archives and re-circulated – an act of reclamation or recycling not completely divorced from that of Jahan's photos. This nostalgic re-viewing or re-experiencing of the city through its historical images can perhaps best be considered in terms of the value of urban space to shared identities. Discussing the relation between material spaces and both memory and identity, Maurice Halbwachs asserted that:

Even if stones are movable, relations between stones and men are not so easily altered. When a group has lived a long time in a place [...] its thoughts [...] are [...] ordered by the succession of images from these external objects.¹²⁶

The photographic reconstruction of cities purportedly *as they were* is thus more complex than an act of constructive forgetting or the creation of an historical record; it is also a positive act of identity assertion. The re-experiencing through photographs of these now-lost or radically changed urban spaces offers a connection to a sense of a

¹²⁵ (Otto Hagemann and Paul Ortwin Rave, *Berlin: Vor der Zerstörung aufgenommen*, 1st edn (Berlin: Deutscher Kunstverlag, 1948)). The different editions of this book include slightly differing selection and arrangements of images. The comments made here relate to the second edition from 1949.

¹²⁶ Maurice Halbwachs, *The Collective Memory* (New York: Harper and Row, 1980), p. 133.

community prior to the blows of destruction and defeat. It conjures the memory of an imagined community which, like destroyed buildings, can be rebuilt.¹²⁷

The reconnection to a notion of community before the destruction is not, however, a neutral gesture, since to evoke such continuity might be construed as evading a reality. The *wie es war* publications exhibit this problem clearly. The melancholy tone which Simmel noted in the romantic ruin suffuses these images and arguably in doing so evokes questions of loss and thus of victimhood.¹²⁸ Moreover, in the case of the Berlin book, while the Olympic stadium created for the Berlin Olympics of 1936 is featured, no synagogues are represented (including that on Oranienburger Straße, attacked during Kristallnacht in 1938, damaged by Allied bombing and levelled under the GDR).¹²⁹ These questions, though less explicit than the accusation of a book like *Dresden: Eine Kamera klagt an*, are particularly interesting when it comes to books like *Berlin: Vor der Zerstörung aufgenommen* which deal with the capital of the former Reich, but no less relevant for other examples of this widespread mode of photographic publishing such as *München in Bild* (1948, fig. 2.3.20) or *Nürnberg vor der Zerstörung* (1950, figs. 2.3.21 and 2.3.22).¹³⁰ These cities also played a significant part in Nazi mythology, Munich being the capital of the Nazi movement as a result of the Beer Hall Putsch of 1923 which led to Hitler's incarceration the following year, and Nuremberg

¹²⁷ The photographic memory of these *wie es war* photobooks thus represents a gesture towards a form of spiritual reconstruction, as hinted at by these lines from the opening paragraph of the introduction: 'Die Bilder dieses Buches wecken die Erinnerung an ein Berlin, das es nicht mehr gibt. [...] Denn was in der Haupttasche das Anlitz einer Stadt prägt, wird gebildet von ihren öffentlichen Bauten und ihren dem öffentlichen Leben dienenden großen Straßenzügen und Plätzen, wird gebildet von den Brennpunkten des Verkehrs, den Sammelpunkten geistiger und wirtschaftlicher Arbeit, den Tonstellen städtbaulicher Gestaltung' (Hagemann and Rave, p. 5).

¹²⁸ In the main it would appear the before and after juxtaposition – used in *Hitler Passed This Way* to point the finger and in Roubier's publications to evoke a shared sense of national loss – are not much in evidence in West Germany in the postwar period except for in texts from the preservation movement which stress the technical aspects of rebuilding significant examples of built heritage (e.g. Georg Lill, *Zerstörte Kunst in Bayern* (Munich: Schnell und Steiner, 1948); Heinz Peters, *Die Baudenkmäler in Nord-Rheinland* (Kevelaer: Butzon & Bercker, 1951); Albert Huyskens and Bernhard Poll, *Das alte Aachen: Seine Zerstörung und sein Wiederaufbau* (Aachen: Aachener Geschichtsverein, 1953). Presumably, the comparison of before and after if not handled in such a putatively 'objective' manner was deemed to be too revealing or pointed a strategy.

¹²⁹ The absence of synagogues is particularly striking given the prevalence of churches in German ruin photography. Vees-Gulani discusses the competing memory debates in which these religious buildings are enmeshed in Dresden in both the postwar and post-reunification eras (Vees-Gulani, pp. 25–47). Jordan also discusses the levelling of synagogues in the postwar Berlin (Jordan, p. 34).

¹³⁰ Georg Lill, *München in Bild* (Stuttgart: H.E. Günther, 1948); Friedrich Kriegbaum, *Nürnberg vor der Zerstörung*, 4th edn (Berlin: Deutscher Kunstverlag, 1950).

being the site of the party congress captured in Leni Riefenstahl's *Triumph of the Will* (1934).¹³¹ Rosenfeld suggests that this interest in regional cities or principal towns was a retreat into the local – evoked by the notion of *Heimat* – as a credible counter to the defeated Reich: 'The venerable concept [of *Heimat*], denoting a regional conception of 'home' or 'homeland', was widely embraced by many Germans after the war as an alternative source of identity that could replace the discredited idea of a centralized nation-state and provide redemption from the recent disaster.'¹³² The appeal to local identities rooted in local architectural heritage saw a renewal of interest in the preservation movement (*Heimatschutz*) of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.¹³³ Despite attitudes of the time, however, for cities prominent in Nazi mythologizing like Munich and Nuremberg, such localism was really no less problematic a collective identity than the notion of the nation considered contaminated by the Reich. Nor was it an inconsequential term for other smaller towns, since the attempted heroisation of civilian dead by the Nazi regime early on in the air war entailed their description as 'soldiers of the *Heimat*'.¹³⁴

The image of bricks and mortar – the urban spaces where community took place – are reconstructed through the historic photographic image in these *wie es war* publications not to promote a particular perspective on the ruins as such, but rather a particular attitude to the city itself. The eponymous title of each book foregrounds *the idea of the city* as its unifying principal; an idea rekindled in these images with an eye on the power it possessed to unite beleaguered inhabitants even in the face of unprecedented material destruction. In doing so, a narrative of loss is presented and a narrative of guilt is evaded through the history of key sites implicated in this guilt which go unacknowledged and in the case of the synagogues even unseen or un-witnessed. This was a form of looking away, as Sebald accuses the postwar generation of doing. The recalling of the now-lost city putatively cleansed of Nazi associations entailed a

¹³¹ Diefendorf discusses the proposals of the Nazi regime to remodel the centres of these and other cities and towns to reflect the ideals of the party under the Representative Cities Programme which took as its model the grandiose plans for turning Berlin into the Reich capital Germania through a dramatic re-planning of its main thoroughfares and the creation of monumental buildings, such as the *Volkshalle* designed by Albert Speer (Diefendorf, *In the Wake of War*, pp. 160–166).

¹³² Rosenfeld, p. 24.

¹³³ Diefendorf, *In the Wake of War*, pp. 48–50.

¹³⁴ Jörg Arnold, 'Beyond Usable Pasts: Rethinking the Memorialization of the Strategic Air War in Germany, 1940 to 1965', in *Memorialization in Germany Since 1945* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), pp. 26–36 (p. 28).

very specific recollection or evocation of the past. This selective, nostalgic memory which was also a positive assertion of identity had an architectural corollary in the replica or ersatz historic buildings championed by traditionalists and built in the likeness of the destroyed cities.

The preceding discussion of German visual culture and questions of the war, bombing, memory and representation has examined the strategies immanent in ruin photobooks of the immediate postwar period and the manner in which such strategies worked to frame images of the ruins in particular ways. This interpretation highlights particular differences between specific publications: the evocation of the *longue durée* in Claasen's images of devastated ecclesiastical architecture; Peter's instrumentalised use of the before and after juxtaposition; the emphasis in *wie es war* photobooks on the city as a locus of identity. It also suggests broad similarities between modes of photographic discourse: the combination on the one hand of accusations and a visualisation of the future, and on the other of a past emphasised and a loss or victimhood hinted at. These publications thus worked to promote specific attitudes which were to prove instrumental in the direction taken by the subsequent reconstruction projects. The differing solutions to the problem of reconstruction – whether these involved a dominance of modernism and reimagining the city (as in Cologne), of traditionalism and the rebuilding of historic monuments (as in Munich) or an uneasy co-existence of the two (as in Dresden) – is representative of the unresolved tensions between these differing postwar attitudes on the questions of the ruins, of defeat, of the victors, of history, and of the future. These photobooks exemplify a central source of such tension, namely, the effort to minimize or marginalise certain aspects of the preceding war, including the Holocaust. It would be inaccurate to assert that photographic culture of the postwar period *as a whole* did not tackle the question of the concentration camps (Barnouw considers in detail the use by Allied forces of photography in the process of confronting the German people with the crimes of Nazism).¹³⁵ However, the absence of references in ruin photobooks to the violence of the Nazi regime is striking.

Debates over the tensions between the perpetrator discourse (Germans as architects of the concentration camps) and the victim discourse (Germans as victims of the Allied bombing campaign, and Soviet violence and terror) persist in both academia

¹³⁵ Barnouw, pp. 1–41. See also Goldstein, pp. 21–39. On coverage of the Nurnberg trials, see Rolleston, 1–19.

and the public sphere. The reception surrounding Sebald's book highlighted these issues, as did commentary regarding Jörg Friedrich's *The Fire: The Bombing of Germany, 1940-1945* (2002).¹³⁶ The publications followed what has been called the 'historian's dispute' (*Historikerstreit*) in the 1980s concerning whether the Holocaust should be considered a unique and incomparable historical event, and whether Germany history exhibited a unique trajectory (a 'special path' or *Sonderweg*) which determined the emergence of Nazism. Questions of analogy or comparability 'open the way to apologetics', one side argued, while a failure to historicise is a failure to understand, argued the other.¹³⁷ In these debates, as in the immediate postwar ruin photobooks, the discourses of guilt and victimhood are inextricably linked. It seems one cannot comment on one without by association passing judgment on the other, or as Stefan Berger has commented, 'the consensus [is] that one can only discuss German victimhood within the parameters of the perpetrator discourse'.¹³⁸ However, while not intending to affirm this marginalisation or to pass judgment on the propriety or otherwise of the victim discourse, the aim here has been to investigate the manner in which photography promoted particular perspectives and attitudes in the postwar period. In the case of both East and West Germany, this entailed an evasion of the

¹³⁶ First published in German in 2002, it was issued in translation six years later (Jörg Friedrich, *The Fire: The Bombing of Germany, 1940-1945* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2008)). Friedrich gives an account of the technological development and the individual suffering which constituted the air war against Germany. Critics took issue with the style and implications of his approach which included gruesome descriptions of firebombing, for instance, but little reference to the Holocaust. Niven suggested that 'The message of his book is that east and west Germans have a common history of victimhood at the hands of the Americans and British, for the bombers dropped their loads all over the country. Friedrich applies SED Dresden rhetoric to the fate of *all* German cities in the bombing war, creating a tapestry of national suffering' (Niven, pp. 109–129 (p. 128)). Andreas Huyssen is more favourable towards what he describes as 'a carefully deployed literary strategy of mixing factual reportage, historical documentation and point of view narration [...] occupying a fault line between historiography and literature'. Huyssen draws a careful distinction between Friedrich's approach (which he acknowledges contains some 'inexcusable slippages' of emphasis and rhetoric) and the fascination the book prompted amongst historical revisionists and the right wing' (Andreas Huyssen, 'Air War Legacies: From Dresden to Baghdad', in *Germans as Victims: Remembering the Past in Contemporary Germany*, ed. by Bill Niven (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), pp. 181–193 (p. 186)).

¹³⁷ (Charles Maier, *The Unmasterable Past: History, Holocaust, and German National Identity*, 2nd edn (Cambridge, MA.: Harvard University Press, 1997), p. 1). Incidentally, two unconventional hybrid studies mixing history with travelogue and autobiography by a Swedish author address the two issues of genocide and aerial bombing, demonstrating how innovative and comparative approaches can be both constructive and illuminating: Sven Lindqvist, *Exterminate All the Brutes*, trans. by Joan Tate (London: Granta, 1998); Sven Lindqvist, *A History of Bombing*, trans. by Linda Haverty Rugg (London: Granta, 2002).

¹³⁸ Stefan Berger, 'On Taboos, Traumas and Other Myths: Why the Debate About German Victims of the Second World War Is Not a Historians' Controversy', in *Germans as Victims: Remembering the Past in Contemporary Germany*, ed. by Bill Niven (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), pp. 210–225 (p. 220).

Holocaust – an unpalatable perspective which reveals how the centrality of the *Shoah* in memorial culture and historical writing of the Second World War is the result of public debate. As Tony Judt remarked:

[...] the really uncomfortable truth about World War Two was that what happened to the Jews between 1939 and 1945 was not nearly as important to most of the protagonists as later sensibilities might wish. [...] In retrospect, 'Auschwitz' is the most important thing to know about World War Two. But that is not how things seemed at the time.¹³⁹

What this interpretation has sought to do is re-engage with the original material, not to use the images as evidence for a history of the bombing war (as Friedrich does with his companion volume of photographs, *Brandstätten*¹⁴⁰), but to better appreciate some central modes of publishing in which ruin photographs circulated. This calls attention to debates about reconstruction in postwar Germany and, by implication, both the longevity of the unresolved tensions inherent in such debates and the functioning of iconic images enmeshed in them, such as the re-circulation of Peter's images of Dresden in fundraising material for the rebuilding of the Frauenkirche in 1995 (figs. 2.3.23 and 2.3.24).¹⁴¹

The debate about whether Germans looked away, refused to look back, forgot, repressed or indeed any other formulation of the 'zero hour' (*Stunde Null*) myth is constructively illuminated by this discussion of ruin photography. As Paul Connerton observed discussing the postwar discourses of Germany, 'We cannot, of course, infer the fact of forgetting from the fact of silence'.¹⁴² What these photographs do demonstrate is the promotion of attitudes to ruins and to history (whether measured in years or centuries) through visual as opposed to verbal means. Questions of blame, of identity, of loss and of victimhood all emerge in the German ruin photography of the late 1940s. The dominant modes of representation exemplified by these ruin photobooks gave way to others forms of expression as years passed (for instance,

¹³⁹ Judt, *Postwar*, p. 821.

¹⁴⁰ Jörg Friedrich, *Brandstätten: Der Anblick des Bombenkriegs*, 2nd edn (Berlin: Propyläen, 2003).

¹⁴¹ Hans-Joachim Kuke, *Wiederaufbau der Frauenkirche Dresden: Ein Appell der Stiftung Frauenkirche Dresden* (Berlin: Kulturstiftung des Länder, 1995).

¹⁴² Connerton, 59–71 (p. 68).

Wolff Strache's photomontage in *Schöpferische Kamera* (1953, fig. 2.3.25)).¹⁴³ But in the immediate postwar period, the past as represented by the ruins is shown to have been both usable and problematic. It resembles the massive task of 'rubble recycling' (*Trümmerverwertung*) faced by the inhabitants of the ruins. Like the bricks, conceptions of the past could be used in the postwar period, but only following deliberate processing – a practice in which photography proved to be both efficient and constructive.

¹⁴³ (Wolf Strache, *Schöpferische Kamera* (Munich: Wilhelm Heyne Verlag, 1953). The pleasures offered by photography in the photo-magazines of the early 1950s will be examined in chapter four, along with the significance of campaigns encouraging amateur photography.

2.4 Conclusion: Ruin Photography & the Europeanisation of the Reconstruction Debate

The selection of ruin photobooks analysed is not exhaustive of the genres or modes of publication making use of such imagery.¹⁴⁴ The above discussion could be expanded by considering in more detail the manner in which different nations treated the ruins of other countries, as well as looking at ruin photography in newspapers and magazines. Alternatively, one could consider the significance of forms of photographic discourse related to the recirculation of ruin photographs in the twenty-first century.¹⁴⁵ However, the representative examples considered here are sufficient to draw conclusions important for a history of Western European postwar reconstruction. The preceding interpretations of postwar ruin photobooks do not *solve* the problem of the myth of the Blitz, the Vichy syndrome or the historian's dispute, since these are not issues that necessarily admit of simplistic answers. Indeed, ruin photobooks exemplify how postwar culture can accommodate a variety of arguments *vis-à-vis* these historiographic concepts. These historical problems have been used as ways of posing questions about the cultural history of the period. Debates within the historiography of the postwar period bring into relief the issues at stake in the representations in ruin photobooks. While looking at ruin photographs as they circulated at the time does not address Sebald's task of forming an adequate idea of the extent and horror of the devastation, it does illuminate the symbolism of the ruin in the workings of cultural memory and imagined communities in the immediate postwar years.

Wartime experiences were different in each of the three comparator nations, but certain concerns and questions resonated in all three countries in the wake of the war nonetheless. The prominence, familiarity or visibility of these images now, some seventy years after the start of the air war, all too often masks their function at the moment of their original circulation. Common themes and motifs in many of these books are the prominence of statues and churches, the absence of humans and the scarcity of human stories, the juxtaposition of before and after photographs, and the emphasis on certain 'pasts' to the exclusion of others. From the surrealist sensibility

¹⁴⁴ There were publications on European war damage distributed in the US, for instance, as well as books making significant use of photographs which reported the war damage of one of comparator nation in another: La Farge; Victor Gollancz, *In Darkest Germany* (London: Victor Gollancz, 1947).

¹⁴⁵ For instance, Antonia Meiners, *Berlin 1945: Eine Chronik in Bildern* (Berlin: Nicolai, 2005).

created by the juxtaposition of Jahan's photographs and Cocteau's text, to the paper memorials for audiences in Liverpool or Rouen and the photographic reconstructions of Nuremberg and Berlin, what they have in common is that images of ruins are never simply a memorial to the dead. The introduction to Roubier's *Caen* asserted that, 'What they [the images] merely hint at are the thousands of lives sacrificed; but the ruins speak for themselves without daring to compare the rubble and the dead, and their mute lament is no less moving for that.'¹⁴⁶ Analysis highlights rather that there is a definite tension between an often stated faith in the evidential value and the specific framing of the images. In practice, the images as circulated in these photobooks are not a mute testament nor do they speak for themselves. They are instrumentalised through a range of strategies which always presented the ruins so as to promote particular perspectives – whether that was the sublime effect of the British ruins which Richards tried to conjure, the shared sense of national loss evoked in Roubier's images of French architectural heritage, or the melancholy perspective of Claassen's Cologne statues which viewers were invited to share. The superficial similarities at the level of the image are thus connected to a wider and more substantial set of shared concerns and resonating issues. While it should not be overstated, it is vital to acknowledge this level of parity since it points the way to broader and more influential issues which will prove fruitful for the comparison of the various reconstruction projects and the related photographic practices.

Discussing attitudes to the ruins in postwar Berlin, Schivelbusch diagnosed an historical-romantic perspective and a modern-surrealistic way of viewing the ruins. The ways of seeing the ruins promoted through photobooks of the time suggests that there were other perspectives on the ruins and that these positions (modern and surrealist, historical and romantic) were not always as rigidly aligned as Schivelbusch suggests. Various points of view circulate in these books – modernist, romantic, surrealist, traditionalist, ideological, amnesiac and utopian – at times competing and at others complementary. What is required is not a binary model, but a flexible matrix of ideas in which particular approaches can be constructively cited in relation to one another in order to grasp what Lagrou referred to as the 'inescapable referential character of group memories'.¹⁴⁷ Schivelbusch, however, also offers the ruins as an illuminating

¹⁴⁶ 'Ce qu'elles ne font que laisser deviner, ce sont les milliers de vies humaines sacrifiées; mais les ruines parlent d'elles-mêmes et sans qu'on ose mettre en balance les décombres et les cadavres, leur plainte muette n'est pas moins émouvante' (Roubier and Réau, n. pag).

¹⁴⁷ Lagrou, p. 301.

metaphor when considering the postwar period: 'whatever is being constructed will to a degree be based on the rubble of its predecessor'.¹⁴⁸ These ruin books illustrate Schivelbusch's metaphor in two important ways: they themselves are based on an intellectual legacy (of the romantics, of the surrealists, etc.), and they also provide foundations for ways of thinking about the task of reconstruction and recovery.

The various representational strategies (of aestheticization, anthropomorphism, abstraction, superimposition, etc.) worked to promote attitudes to the ruins (relating to questions of the immediate past and the *longue durée*, memory and forgetting, blame and triumph). Through the cultural mediation of photography, the impact of total war in Europe promoted particular ways of seeing and understanding urban space. Reconstruction and recovery were not simply a process of rebuilding the material environment, but of strengthening or rebuilding the foundations of national cohesion. The comparisons drawn here between countries have been instructive in highlighting the similarities and differences between different national and local approaches to the question of ruins, memory and identity as mediated by the practice of photography and publishing. Of course, the issues underpinning these representations can be traced in other cultural artefacts as well as ruin photobooks. What the discussion illustrates is not the uniqueness of the format, but the manner in which visual material could be every bit as formative as verbal material when it comes to promoting particular attitudes. Since the material destruction of the British, French and German cities had such a considerable visual impact on urban space – as the decisions regarding reconstruction were to have – it is vital that this visual culture be better appreciated. The visibility of the ruins in postwar Western Europe bears an important relation to the visibility of the reconstruction effort. Photography was a key medium in representing both phenomena.

Despite differing wartime experiences and postwar situations, the consumption of ruin imagery in the three comparator countries shared representational strategies which drew on older cultural templates and addressed similar postwar concerns of national recovery. The instrumentalisation and consumption of ruin imagery with its capacity to shape perspectives on national pasts and urban futures was a phenomenon repeated, albeit differently inflected, in all three comparator nations. In the postwar moment, local ruins were frequently implicated in broader national debates – whether that consisted in the weaving of local British loss into the narrative of global events of the Second World War (as exemplified in *Pictures from the Post*), the nationalisation of

¹⁴⁸ Schivelbusch, p. 183.

French ruin imagery in the service of postwar reconciliation (as in Roubier's three publications), or the retreat into localism following the grandiose and deadly ambitions of the former Reich (as typified by German *wie es war* photobooks). Adapting Sebald's advocated approach of supplementing individual eyewitness accounts with a synoptic view, this chapter has ranged the interpretation of individual visual documents and their mode of address to audiences alongside discussion of crucial themes or issues of the postwar moment to reveal the formative role of photography in memorial discourses. As noted in the introductory chapter, analysis of individual publications or images is not intended to imply a particular causal weight on these images – although obviously images like those of Dresden and St Paul's have become iconic. Rather, the images selected above exemplify or facilitate reflection on the discursive formations in which ruin imagery circulated and facilitate a cultural history of ruin imagery which negotiates that relationship in thinking through the past – addressed by Sebald – between the particular and the general, the eye-witness testimony and the synoptic account, between the close-up and the wide-angle view.

Comparability in this context is not uncontroversial. As William Rasch has succinctly stated, 'Comparison may be one of the customary stocks in trade of historians and cultural critics everywhere, but comparison is strictly *Verboten* when it comes to Germany.'¹⁴⁹ Nonetheless, comparisons of similarities and differences are essential in order to bring into relief the visual culture of reconstruction and the function of photography in it. As the various local and national projects gained momentum, the centrality of transnational debates and even identities became heightened in Western Europe, not least as a reaction to the increasing polarisation of the Cold War. The next chapter considers how the common phenomenon of widely-circulating ruin imagery connected with the promotion using photography of an International Style in postwar architecture. Ruin imagery that was effectively nationalised through the representational strategies and framing of numerous photobooks considered here was, it will be argued, also enmeshed with the cultivation of an internationalised image of modernist architecture. Published in formats other than photobooks the transnational circulation of ruin imagery (along with aerial photography and slum photography) held an important position within the discursive formations which helped cultivate the postwar internationalisation of modernist architecture.

¹⁴⁹ William Rasch, 'It Began with Coventry': On Expanding the Debate over the Bombing War', in *Bombs Away!: Representing the Air War Over Europe and Japan* (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2006), pp. 395–401 (p. 396).

The comparative approach adopted *vis-à-vis* ruin photobooks has considered the three countries independently. In the following chapter looking at mass housing and architectural photography, the interaction of national discourses and cultural exchange across national borders will become more significant. For instance, later postwar years saw the emergence of popular multi-lingual publications which circulated representation of iconic buildings through the same set of stock images in all three nations. An early example of such intertwined national discourses can be seen in a photobook documenting a destruction that happened five years after the end of the Second World War. In 1950, the Berlin Schloß in the Soviet sector of the city was levelled with explosives. Officially, the East German authorities claimed the structure was unsound following bomb-damage. Eventually, the East German parliament was built on this site, along with a cultural centre for the people.¹⁵⁰ Like many of the representational strategies deployed in the ruin photobooks discussed above, the destruction of the Schloß in 1950 entailed an active editing of the record of the past (as represented here by the architectural heritage of the urban fabric) with a view to creating symbols for an imagined future. *The Palace of Berlin and its Downfall* (1951) – commissioned by the West German Federal Ministry for German Affairs and published in both German and English – documents the destruction of the Schloß (figs. 2.4.1 to 2.4.3).¹⁵¹

Four facets of this state-sponsored ruin photobook are shared with the material to be looked at in the following chapters. Firstly, the publication (and the destruction/reconstruction event itself) garnered an international audience. Secondly, the task of reconstruction was not simply a matter of rebuilding what had been lost due to war; it segued into a continuous process of urban destruction, re-planning and renewal which was strongly influenced by debates over the supposedly competing demands of satisfying the needs of the future city or preserving the architecture of the past.¹⁵² Thirdly, this continuous process was played out not only in material urban

¹⁵⁰ This Palast der Republik, designed by Heinz Graffunder and constructed in the mid-1970s, was in turn destroyed following the reunification of Germany. The official reason for this demolition was the discovery of asbestos in 1990 (Gamboni, p. 69). Like that completed in Dresden for the Frauenkirche, a campaign to build a faithful replica of the Schloß on its original site is ongoing with governmental support.

¹⁵¹ *Das Berliner Schloss und sein Untergang: Ein Bildbericht über die Zerstörung berliner Kulturdenkmäler*, ed. by Karl Rodemann (Berlin: Des Bundesministeriums für gesamtdeutsche Fragen, 1951); *The Palace of Berlin and Its Downfall: An Illustrated Report on the Destruction of Cultural Monuments in Berlin*, ed. by Karl Rodemann, 2nd edn (Berlin: Tauber, 1951).

¹⁵² Meller, p. 82; Evenson, pp. 309–310; Diefendorf, *In the Wake of War*, p. xvii.

spaces, but also in the discursive spaces of visual culture – a culture in which photography had a prime position. Finally, as an official publication by the West German state of a photographic record of the destruction of architectural heritage by the East German state, this photobook also represents the war of images – unfolding in cities and mobilised through photographic representation – which took place in Cold War Europe. Through the medium of photography, images of architectural projects (like the presumably politically motivated destruction of the supposedly bourgeois Schloß) journeyed beyond national borders marking an accelerated Europeanisation of architectural debate and practice, as well as the growing importance in international relations of the image of the city – a multi-faceted phenomenon which will be examined further in the following chapters.

Addressing the relation between architectural photography and architectural style, the next chapter will by necessity take a different approach to the task of comparative analysis – one which can account for the transnational cultural exchange constituted by the circulation of images and debates about reconstruction from one country in another. In looking at the question of housing and the vital role photography played in disseminating ideas about reconstruction, the next chapter will focus on a shared corpus of images and the debate (spanning, if not transcending, national borders) facilitated by this imagery. In photobooks, ruin photography circulated in locally- or nationally-oriented discourses. As will be argued in what follows, it was also part of a wider network of debates articulating certain ideas and ideals regarding urban space for which the task of rebuilding was an unprecedented opportunity. Ruin photography was a key cultural product in relation to which the discourses of architecture and postwar reconstruction were defined. Ruin photography was thus part of the debates which generated the huge significance with which architecture was freighted in the postwar period. What follows will consider the central role of photography in the task architects, planners and politicians faced in making public their proposals for addressing the challenge of postwar reconstruction.

Chapter 3: Through These Architect's Eyes: Architectural Photography and the Housing Question, 1947-54

Housing was the key concern of postwar reconstruction in all three comparator countries, as repeatedly stated during and after the war. In France, 460,000 homes had been destroyed and 1,900,000 severely damaged, representing 18% of the total housing stock.¹ In Britain, 500,000 homes had been destroyed and a further 250,000 severely damaged.² In the area that became the Federal Republic of Germany, 22% of the housing stock had been destroyed or damaged beyond repair; a further 23% had sustained some degree of damage.³ This dire situation was compounded by the substandard conditions and serious shortages resulting from the prewar depression, and by the fact that little or no housing construction took place during the war. Additionally, postwar factors exacerbated the European-wide housing crisis. For instance, there was an influx of refugees to postwar Germany. In Britain, the population grew by 1,000,000 people in wartime while the average family size shrank.⁴ There was a marked pause between the end of conflict and the gathering of a momentum to the work of rebuilding, but ultimately state-organised or state-supported efforts to address these housing problems were to have a significant impact on the towns and cities of Western Europe. Only 200,000 new housing units had been completed in France by 1950, but in 1958 alone over 290,000 were built rising to nearly 370,000 in 1965.⁵ In Britain, 125,000 prefabricated housing units were built by 1948, but it was the 1,500,000 new permanent units built by 1951, and the 200,000 to 300,000 each year thereafter, which were to make a permanent impact on the towns and cities of the UK.⁶ In West Germany, 340,000 housing units were completed in 1950⁷ and a further

¹ Voldman, p. 25.

² John R. Short, *Housing in Britain: The Post-war Experience* (London: Methuen, 1982), p. 42.

³ Diefendorf, *In the Wake of War*, p. 108.

⁴ Short, p. 42.

⁵ Jon Pearsall, 'France', in *Housing in Europe*, ed. by Martin Wynn (London: Croom Helm, 1984), pp. 9–54 (p. 14).

⁶ Short, pp. 42–9.

⁷ Werner Durth, 'Architecture as Political Medium', in *The United States and Germany in the Era of the Cold War, 1945-1990: A Handbook*, ed. by Detlef Junker, 2 vols. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), I, 480–487 (p. 483).

300,000 were completed every year for the rest of the decade.⁸ The scale of housing construction in the two decades from the late 1940s is remarkable. In 1966, surveying postwar architecture in the Federal Republic, architectural historian John Burchard reported that, while in 1945 the rubble in West Germany would have 'provided material for a wall [...] six feet thick and twenty feet high' around its border, two decades later one in every four West Berliners was living in a new flat.⁹

It was not simply the scale, but also the style of housing construction that affected the urban spaces of Western Europe. Postwar, modernist architecture became the principal approach for tackling the housing crisis – an approach which conceived architecture as a transnational practice, revolutionised by the industrialisation of construction techniques, demanding simplicity of form and a rejection of ornament or decoration. It was not an approach that went unchallenged; as Joan Ockman notes, 'Modernist architecture became dominant while being subjected to increasingly intense questioning.'¹⁰ Nonetheless, modernist architecture shaped the terms of debate in the postwar period, even transforming the preferred architectural styles of its opponents, as will be argued. And architectural photography in public debates about reconstruction and mass housing between 1947 and 1954 played a significant part in the predominance of modernist architecture which was set to continue in the field of housing construction well into the 1960s. This chapter examines the style and circulation of architectural photography in the postwar decade in a range of publications, including official pamphlets, professional journals, popular periodicals and architectural guidebooks. It will address the impact of this mode of representation and how, when it came to the architecture of mass housing, persistently stressed questions of visibility.

Continuing the vigorous transnational interwar debate – hampered between 1933 and 1945, but never extinguished – town planners and architects waged a concerted postwar effort to define and promote the Modern Movement. It was a debate increasingly saturated with, even dominated by, photographic representations with the modernist campaign drawing heavily on ruin imagery, as well as aerial and slum

⁸ Declan Kennedy, 'West Germany', in *Housing in Europe*, ed. by Martin Wynn (London: Croom Helm, 1984), pp. 55–74 (p. 55).

⁹ John Burchard, *The Voice of the Phoenix: Postwar Architecture in Germany* (Cambridge, MA.: MIT Press, 1966), pp. 3 & 4.

¹⁰ Joan Ockman, 'Introduction', in *Architecture Culture, 1943-1968: A Documentary Anthology*, ed. by Joan Ockman (New York: Rizzoli, 1993), pp. 13–24 (p. 13).

photography. Specifically, analysis will address the use of architectural photography by the French Ministère de la reconstruction et de l'urbanisme (representing the most concerted state-sponsored effort amongst the three nations to visualise and communicate progress in the field of reconstruction to a public), in the British journal the *Architectural Review* (arguably the most influential professional journal of the period), and in the multilingual publications scrutinizing the progress of (and serving the international interest in) the postwar reconstruction of occupied Germany. Ultimately, postwar modernist architecture was different from its interwar predecessor in several important ways which will be unpacked in this chapter exploring the dominance of photographic representation in architectural debate and the role of photography in promoting high-rise buildings as the essential solution to the postwar housing crisis in all three comparator nations. It will be argued that owing to architectural photography, modernist architecture of the first postwar decade became, in short, a style widely employed, highly visible (both on the ground and in publications) and largely divorced from the radical politics which animated it in the interwar period.

In the first postwar decade, housing was a topic which attracted not just local or national, but also European audiences, promoting a cross-national cultural exchange of ideas and images. The promise of improved housing after the conflict recurred in wartime discourses of solidarity in Britain and under both the Nazi and the Vichy regimes. As a consequence, 'the home' had a charged significance in the postwar period, as the British peer, Lord Horder, made clear:

A great, and significant, correlative of the Family is the Home – a name which is more dear, I suppose, to people the world over than almost any other in their language. To a great extent the sentiment of the Family has been transferred to the Home. And just as (to use the words of an old writer) "we pass through love of our family to love of mankind," so we extend the notion of the Family home to that of our country.¹¹

In the postwar moment, housing and the idea of home were intimately connected with the national projects of reconstruction. Yet, public interest and debate extended beyond the borders of a particular nation, as suggested by the title of the publication in which Horder's comments appeared: *Rebuilding Family Life in the Post-war World* (1945).

¹¹ Thomas Horder, 'Preface', in *Rebuilding Family Life in the Post-war World: An Enquiry with Recommendations*, ed. by Sir James Marchant (London: Odhams Press, 1945), p. 5.

Another example of this expanded public sphere is found in a French journal, *Réalités allemandes*, which offered its readers synopses of German publications and public debates. Extracts from the *Zeitschrift für Raumforschung* included the assertion by town planner Gustav Ölsner, commenting on Hamburg's need to create new communities of two to ten thousand inhabitants in multi-storey blocks, that 'We should see no distinction between urban construction and regional planning'.¹² Ölsner's use of visual terms is representative of the broader discourse of planning and reconstruction in all three countries, which (in addition to relying heavily on photographic illustration) consistently referenced the faculty of sight, the act of seeing and the importance of attaining the right perspective on a problem. These examples point to three central elements of the postwar debate about housing: it was much more than a practical consideration, having and maintaining into the 1950s a great symbolical importance amongst the challenges of postwar reconstruction; it was an intense cross-national debate in which professionals, politicians and the public took an interest in proposed housing solutions abroad, as well as in their own countries; and it was a debate which not only made use of photography, but also frequently employed visual metaphors.

Of course, none of these characteristics of the postwar debate on housing is novel. The association of the family, the home and the nation predates the war, as does cross-national cultural exchange and a preoccupation with the visual in architecture. However, in the postwar period, the opportunity presented by the task of reconstruction and the promotion of modernist architecture collided in a manner that would impact on urban space to an extent only surpassed by the industrial revolution. The momentum that formed behind the material task of rebuilding destroyed buildings, town and cities segued into a more broadly conceived process of urban renewal in which the construction of housing was a key part. The circulation of architectural imagery is central to this transition from reconstruction to renewal in the cities of Western Europe. As Alison Ravetz has remarked of 'the brief boom in high-rise housing from 1958 to 1968' in Britain:

From the view of economic efficiency, there was no convincing justification for high-rise building. Its claim to deliver fast, cheap, high-quality buildings was not demonstrated at the time, and further passage of time, with many demolitions, only made it more hollow. [...] Never

¹² 'Städtebau und Landesplanung dürfen keine Grenzen sehen' ('Raumforschung', *Réalités allemandes*, 25 (1951), pp. 56-62 (p. 60)).

debated in Parliament, the episode clearly had a momentum of its own. The question must then arise how such a risky, expensive and (as it turned out) wasteful experiment could ever have been embarked upon?¹³

She ultimately concludes that – in addition to pertinent factors such as vested interests, inherited ideas of public health officials, town planners and architects, and state subsidies which grew as the height of buildings grew – the dramatic change in the urban landscape was driven by *the powerful image of the high-rise housing development*. It was an image easily popularised, emulated and implemented without the social purpose that originally inspired this new form of urban living, as developed and debated earlier in the century. Even into the 1960s it was an image which met little opposition, the opening of each new building being positively reported in the press. This chapter analyses the role of architectural photography in creating and promoting this powerful image of the high-rise housing block in the postwar moment. It also addresses how this powerful image, though transnational in its appeal, drew on the sort of ruin imagery excavated in the last chapter which was so charged in nationally important discourses of memory and forgetting, recovery and reconciliation.

The camera's ability to transform the lived space of the city into a two-dimensional visual artefact not only worked to popularise a particular solution to the postwar housing problem; it also promoted a way of thinking about architecture and urban space in which visuality was deemed to be its most important characteristic. This 'eye-obsessed' or ocularcentric approach to architecture sidelined the physical aspects of housing; it privileged the visual over the haptic. In doing so, architectural discourse – nourished and furthered by architectural photography – resulted in what Juhani Pallasmaa called 'an architecture of visual images' in which buildings 'turned into image products detached from existential depth and sincerity'.¹⁴ As Pallasmaa noted, tracing interest in the eye and vision back through Descartes to the Greeks, ocularcentrism in architecture did not begin with the invention of photography. Yet, in the postwar decade, the impact of this approach on the cities of Western Europe accelerated, as the challenge of reconstruction met with the photography-saturated

¹³ Alison Ravetz, *Council Housing and Culture: The History of a Social Experiment* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2001), pp. 104–5.

¹⁴ Juhani Pallasmaa, *The Eyes of the Skin: Architecture and the Senses* (Chichester: John Wiley and Sons, 2005), p. 30.

architectural discourse and practice of the Modern Movement, which had intensified over the interwar period and been co-opted into wartime propaganda.

Much scholarly work has been conducted on architectural historiography and criticism since Miles Glendinning and Stefan Muthesius wrote in *Tower Block* (1994) that 'a literary and cultural history of the style of architectural journalism has still to be written'.¹⁵ The function of the photograph in writing architectural history has been tackled by Gérard Monnier and Iain Borden who, noting the polysemous nature of the image, suggested various strategies to marshal its unruly and fragmentary sampling of the world of architecture.¹⁶ Such an approach does not directly address the manner in which ways of seeing, facilitated and influenced by photography, have been relevant to ways of thinking about urban space and to architectural practice. Other less positivist approaches have been taken up in pursuit of an archaeology of architectural discourse, but often emphasis is placed on words, concepts and verbal rhetoric, to the exclusion of architectural imagery.¹⁷ Robert Elwall has written an international survey of architectural photography, recently complemented by the essays in a publication accompanying the exhibition, *Ein neue Blick*, at the Berlin Museum für Fotografie.¹⁸ Most instructive, however, is the work of architectural historians such as Beatriz Colomina and Anthony Vidler, whose analysis centres on the relationship between representational strategies and rhetoric in architectural discourse, and architectural practice.¹⁹ Scholarship in this vein demonstrates an essential sensitivity to the question of visibility, required to grasp photography's impact on the debate about and construction of public housing in the postwar period. The representational strategies of architectural photography, the other modes of photography it was ranged alongside,

¹⁵ Miles Glendinning and Stefan Muthesius, *Tower Block: Modern Public Housing in England, Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993), p. 105.

¹⁶ Gérard Monnier, 'La Photographie d'architecture et ses usages', in *Architecture, photographie: Actes du colloque de Lille, 7 mai 1999*, ed. by Daisy Hochart (Lille: École d'architecture de Lille, 1999), pp. 66–81; Iain Borden, 'Imaging Architecture: The Uses of Photography in the Practice of Architectural History', *The Journal of Architecture*, 12 (2007), 57–77.

¹⁷ For instance, Adrian Forty, *Words and Buildings: A Vocabulary of Modern Architecture* (London: Thames and Hudson, 2004).

¹⁸ Robert Elwall, *Building with Light: The International History of Architectural Photography* (London: Merrell, 2004); *Ein Neuer Blick: Architekturfotografien aus den Staatlichen Museen zu Berlin*, ed. by Ludger Derenthal and Christine Kühn (Berlin: Wasmuth, 2010).

¹⁹ For example, Beatriz Colomina, *Privacy and Publicity: Modern Architecture as Mass Media* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1994); Anthony Vidler, 'Photourbanism: Planning the City from Above and from Below', in *A Companion to the City*, ed. by Gary Bridge and Sophie Watson (Oxford: Blackwell, 2003), pp. 35–45.

and the publishing formats in which the image of various reconstruction projects circulated cross-nationally will be the focus of this chapter. Analysis of these will demonstrate, as Claire Zimmerman has observed, that in the postwar period ‘the existence of a building on a site and its appearance across the world in two-dimensional media were ineluctable co-presences’.²⁰

The first section of this chapter excavates the promotion of modernist architecture by some of its chief proponents in the early twentieth century. Architectural photography was central to this campaign, offering a valuable means of what Richard Williams has termed ‘aggressively propagandist’ representational strategies on behalf of the Modern Movement.²¹ It also considers the charged significance of the terms ‘planning’ and ‘reconstruction’, how these relate to the promotion of modernist architecture, and how architectural photography helped shape the postwar meaning of these terms. The second section looks at architectural photography in France with reference to Le Corbusier’s Unité d’habitation project in Marseille, examining the image of the building in official and unofficial publications. The third section scrutinises the appreciation of architecture as a visual object advanced by the British journal, *Architectural Review*. It includes consideration of the *Review*’s commentary on and photography of the Churchill Gardens Estate in London. Section four addresses the international dimension of reconstruction in Germany, resulting first from occupation and then from the heightened significance of the new Federal Republic during the Cold War. It examines the contrasting photographic representations of the Grindelhochhäuser in Hamburg. The concluding section of this chapter briefly considers a critique of postwar architecture from within the Modern Movement, gaining ground in Britain in the 1950s. It highlights the manner in which the representational strategies of architectural photography in the period 1947 to 1954 had a lasting impact in defining and promulgating an ‘International Style’ – an impact from which even the critics of postwar mass housing were not immune.

In 1949, in a reissue of his book, *The German Housing Primer*, the architect Otto Völckers asserted that ‘the history of housing is part of cultural history, and one of

²⁰ Claire Zimmerman, ‘Photographic Images from Chicago to Hunstanton’, in *Neo-avant-garde and Postmodern: Postwar Architecture in Britain and Beyond*, ed. by Claire Zimmerman and Mark Crinson (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2010), pp. 203–28 (p. 221).

²¹ Williams uses the term specifically to characterise the work of photographers Mark Oliver Dell and H. L. Wainwright in the 1930s (Richard Williams, ‘Representing Architecture: The British Architectural Press in the 1960s’, *Journal of Design History*, 9 (1996), 285–296 (p. 287)).

the most important'.²² For this cultural history of postwar urban photography, the question of public housing is one of the most important elements. After the ruins came the reconstruction; and, furthered by a long-running campaign to address the problems of the industrialised city, urban reconstruction segued into urban renewal. The changes to the built environment of Western Europe ushered in by this transition from reconstruction to renewal were to be the lasting urban legacy of the postwar period. What Summerson suggested about Britain ('that more destruction of historic buildings took place after 1945 than during the years of the blitz') arguably pertains to Western Europe as a whole.²³ Likewise, what Diefendorf asserted about Germany ('that a change in German thinking took place in the mid-1950s [... characterised by] the shift from a self-consciously modest period of reconstruction to a period of new construction that was robust, self-congratulatory, and anticipated a modern future') is equally relevant to all three comparator nations. Photography played a significant part in the formation of architectural discourse and practice in this decisive period for the urban spaces of Western Europe.

²² 'Hausgeschichte ist ein Stück Kulturgeschichte, und zwar eins der wichtigsten' (Otto Völckers, *Deutsche Hausfibel* (Bamberg: Baessler, 1949), p. 7).

²³ Summerson, p. 10.

3.1 *Photography and Propagandising for Modernist Architecture before 1947*

The opportunity? The Blitz has cleared some sites and we must clear many more – but for what? Has the Blitz cleared our vision too and made it possible to see what London might be? And, if we can see this, have we the imagination and power to realise our hopes, or shall we just return to the old unplanned city blocks, to the same old wild activity of private speculation, to recreate the same old jumble of courtyards and streets and competing façades? An inheritance for the future as grim as anything we know to-day. [...] OR can we plan London; give it order and efficiency and beauty and spaciousness?

E. J. Carter and Ernő Goldfinger²⁴

As Jeffry M. Diefendorf has noted, 'It is worth recalling that theories of urban planning, housing, and architecture were all part of an international discussion throughout [... the twentieth] century, a discussion only suspended by World War II.'²⁵ Modernist architecture had a privileged position in Western Europe in the postwar period owing to concerted propagandising on behalf of the Modern Movement, stretching back over half a century, in which photography played an integral part. However, it was, as a consequence of this propagandising, a specific brand of modernist architecture allied with photographic image-making. The medium influenced ways of looking at and conceptualising urban space with the effect that modernist architecture of the postwar period had a very different character to that of the interwar period. Aerial, slum and ruin photography were prevalent in the discursive formations which operated across national borders to generate the meaning and importance of modernist architecture. As fundamental was the repeated use of visual metaphors interwoven with photographic representation in the debates of Britain, France and West Germany. The ubiquity of photographic imagery and a vocabulary that favoured visual terms created a postwar architecture dominated by the visual and the photographic. A brief review of these

²⁴ E. J. Carter and Ernő Goldfinger, *The County of London Plan Explained* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1945), p. 13.

²⁵ Jeffry M. Diefendorf, 'American Influences on Urban Developments in West Germany', in *The United States and Germany in the Era of the Cold War, 1945-1990: A Handbook*, ed. by Detlef Junker, 2 vols. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), I, 587–93 (p. 587).

aspects of architectural debate and of photography's position in this propaganda campaign will contextualise Carter and Goldfinger's comment on the opportunity of the Blitz, the significance of planning, and importance of vision. It will also facilitate the detailed analysis in subsequent sections of the transplantation and transfiguring of those specific architectural ideas and forms, shaped in the interwar period and implemented in the postwar moment.²⁶

At the turn of the twentieth century, following an age of industrialisation and expansion, architecture and town planning were already perceived as both a transnational issue and a political problem. Pollution, overcrowding, and lack of basic amenities constituted what Helen Meller calls 'the challenge of how to stop cities killing people'.²⁷ Ebenezer Howard, whose garden city concept proposed the founding of new towns and emphasised the value of open space, established the International Federation for Housing and Planning in 1913 to foster debate. After the First World War, modernists laboured to dictate the terms of the continuing debate. In his internationally successful book *Vers une architecture* (1923), Le Corbusier argued – through incantatory polemic and hagiographic photographs of ocean liners, aeroplanes and automobiles – that only modernist architecture could circumvent revolution.²⁸ In the Weimar Republic, housing estates like the Stuttgart Weißenhofsiedlung (overseen by Mies van der Rohe and completed in 1927) drew interest from British local councillors seeking lessons for their own housing problems. When the Congrès Internationaux d'Architecture Moderne (CIAM) was established in 1928 by Sigfried Giedion and others, its members expressed their commitment to architecture as a

²⁶ The approach taken here was articulated by Peter Hall when discussing competing and overlapping visions of 'the good city': 'Their implementation came often in very different places, in very different circumstances, and often through very different mechanisms, from those their inventors had originally envisaged. Transplanted as they were in time and space and socio-political environment, it is small wonder that the results were often bizarre, sometimes catastrophic' (Peter Hall, *Cities of Tomorrow: An Intellectual History of Urban Planning and Design in the Twentieth Century*, 3rd edn (Oxford: Blackwell, 2002), pp. 2–3). Goldfinger embodies the 'transplantation' or cross-national cultural exchange that constituted an architectural style which – in less than half a century – has transitioned from avant-garde to architectural heritage. A Hungarian-born French-educated architect, Goldfinger moved to London, where he built modest private homes (like those in Willow Road, now owned by the National Trust) and large high-rise blocks (such as the Balfon and Trellick Towers).

²⁷ Meller, p. 2.

²⁸ Le Corbusier's authoritarian solutions to social problems have been explored by Manfredo Tafuri amongst others: 'Le Corbusier's notion of the city is directly related to the long laborious development of the nineteenth-century strategies aimed at controlling social behaviour' (Manfredo Tafuri, 'Machine Et Memoire': The City in the Work of Le Corbusier', in *Le Corbusier*, ed. by H. Allen Brooks, trans. by Stephen Sartarelli (Princeton: Princeton Architectural Press, 1983), pp. 203–18 (p. 204)).

social force and an international project. The founding document, the Sarraz Declaration, highlighted housing as a defining issue and took aim at public opinion: 'It is essential today for architects to exercise an influence on public opinion by informing the public of the fundamentals of the new architecture.'²⁹ One example of such propagandising, Walter Behrendt's photobook *Der Sieg des neuen Baustils* (1927), displayed the Wießenhofsiedlung on its cover (fig. 3.1.1).³⁰ Likewise extensively mobilising photographs to promote modernist architecture, in 1932 a book and exhibition by Philip Johnson and Henry-Russell Hitchcock proved a seminal opportunity to influence public opinion.³¹ The original exhibition toured a dozen American venues, but the book popularised an umbrella term or sobriquet for modernist architecture: the International Style.³² The following year, the Bauhaus was closed by the new Nazi regime. As fascism spread across Europe and many architects and commentators became exiles, the internationalism and politicisation of architectural debate took a new turn.

Photography of buildings and models successfully conveyed an image of modernist architecture across national boundaries. At the same time, the medium played a transformative role in architectural debate of the period. The discussions of modernist architecture and town planning became synthesised into one single topic, exemplified in the theme for the CIAM meeting of 1933, 'The Functional City', which proposed that architecture and planning should address four essential aspects of urban life: dwelling, transport, recreation and work. The functional city concept brought together the transnational and political dimensions of architectural debate present at the turn of the century, and the central concerns of housing and public opinion

²⁹ Congrès Internationaux d'Architecture Moderne, 'The Declaration of La Sarraz', in *Architectural Theory: An Anthology*, ed. by Harry Francis Mallgrave and Christina Contandriopoulos, 2 vols. (Oxford: Blackwell, 2008), II, 220–2 (p. 222).

³⁰ Walter Curt Behrendt, *Der Sieg des neuen Baustils* (Stuttgart: Fr. Wedekind, 1927).

³¹ Henry Hitchcock, *The International Style: Architecture Since 1922* (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 1932).

³² Terence Riley has written on the use of fifty-five photographs in the exhibition, *Modernist Architecture: International Exhibition*, at the Museum of Modern Art, New York: while the curators referred to it as 'an exhibition of models, [...] it would have been more accurate to call it a photographic exhibition'; the images were 'typically three feet high and hung at eye level'; and 'while the media [models & photographs] implied, first, an operation of surrogacy, the installation supports a secondary reading of the models and photographs as *objets d'art* in themselves' (Terence Riley, *The International Style: Exhibition 15 and the Museum of Modern Art* (New York: Rizzoli, 1992), pp. 79, 76 & 75). The third and final section of both exhibition and catalogue covered the topic of housing, comprising eleven photographs (Museum of Modern Art, *Modern Architecture: International Exhibition*. (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1932)).

articulated in the Sarraz Declaration. It also represented a fundamental feature of the modernist perspective on the city: creative destruction.³³ This view and its connection to photography were exemplified in Le Corbusier's *Aircraft* (1935).³⁴ In this book of aeroplane photographs, town plans and aerial views (figs. 3.1.2 and 3.1.3), Le Corbusier held forth: 'Cities must be extricated from their misery, come what may. Whole quarters of them must be destroyed and new cities built'.³⁵ In the early 1800s, a whole city could be surveyed from a cathedral spire.³⁶ Following rapid expansion and the advent of flight, a century later both the urban scene surveyed and the means of surveying had been radically transformed. The aerial photograph exposed the problem of cities with startling clarity, Le Corbusier argued: 'By means of the aeroplane, we now have proof, recorded on the photographic plate, of the rightness of our desire to alter methods of architecture and town planning'.³⁷ The combination of the aerial view and the camera was formative for architecture and town planning since, capturing an image of urban sprawl, the aerial photograph at once pictured the problem and offered a solution – planning prosecuted from above. Yet, unlike the cathedral-bound observer, the airborne viewer is detached from the scene surveyed, a detachment doubled by the mediation of the camera. This distancing from the city, architecture, and its inhabitants which aerial photography facilitated was to prove corrosive, as will be explored further.³⁸ However, for Le Corbusier, the aerial photograph represented rather clarity of vision and thought: 'When the eye sees clearly, the mind makes a clear decision.' With such 'clarity' came calls for a clear field of action for architects and planners – a *tabula rasa*. Within a decade of its publication, the Second World War would offer the chance to realise the prophecy of *Aircraft* that 'cities will arise out of their ashes'.³⁹

³³ David Harvey has examined creative destruction as 'an essential condition of modernity': David Harvey, *The Condition of Postmodernity: An Enquiry into the Origins of Cultural Change* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1989), p. 19.

³⁴ Le Corbusier, *Aircraft* (London: The Studio, 1935).

³⁵ Le Corbusier, *Aircraft*, n. pag.

³⁶ Paul Connerton, *How Modernity Forgets* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), pp. 102–3.

³⁷ Le Corbusier, *Aircraft*, n. pag.

³⁸ M. Christine Boyer noted that aviation suggested simultaneously, 'a revolution of perspective and visual interpretation' (M. Christine Boyer, 'Aviation and the Aerial View: Le Corbusier's Spatial Transformations in the 1930s and 1940s', *Diacritics*, 33 (2003), 93–116 (p. 98)). Citing Siegfried Kracauer, Vidler noted this process of double detachment (Vidler, pp. 35–45 (p. 35)). Anti-humanist strains are again evidenced here in Le Corbusier's quoting of Mussolini on the role of the aeroplane. In *Aircraft*, the totalising view from the aeroplane blurs into a totalitarian politics.

³⁹ Le Corbusier, *Aircraft*, n. pag.

Deployment of the aerial photograph's supposed clarity of vision is repeated in José Luis Sert's *Can Our Cities Survive?* (1942).⁴⁰ Like *The Charter of Athens* published in Vichy France the following year, Sert's book sought to summarise and popularise the functional city concept.⁴¹ Published in the United States as destruction intensified in Europe and elsewhere, the book began with an aerial photograph of New York (fig. 3.1.4). The introduction stated: 'Through the aeroplane and the camera we have acquired a *complete and precise view of our cities from above*. Air views have revealed to man a new "urban façade," a perspective which has never been known before.'⁴² Sert's book also used slum and ruin photographs to promote a humanist and future-focused identity for the work of CIAM architects and planners. Fig. 3.1.5 outlines the four tenets of the functional city in a plaque superimposed over photographic illustrations of urban problems. Opposite Sert lamented the state of the modern city: '*Congestion increases [...] Blight spreads [...] Chaos intensifies*'.⁴³ On subsequent pages are images described as slums in London and Paris. Depicted throughout in copious architectural photographs, modernist architecture is offered as the counter-image to this depressing picture. It is also promoted as a solution to the problems of the future, as well as the legacy of the past. Illustrated by an uncaptioned photograph of Guernica in ruins (fig 3.1.6), a section on dwelling suggests that high-rise blocks are safer, offering a difficult target and the possibility of 'an efficient shelter system'.⁴⁴ Recruited to this aerial perspective, the viewer is invited to see the question of architecture and town planning as one. Thus, the aerial views, slum photographs and ruin imagery collude to construct an identity for modernist architecture in which the high-rise building is presented as the answer to both squalor and vulnerability to aerial attack.

Following the start of the war, a far larger propaganda drive was initiated and modernist propagandising became entwined with this broader phenomenon. Postwar planning was a key element of public debate in all countries. As already noted, Jean-

⁴⁰ José Luis Sert, *Can Our Cities Survive?: An ABC of Urban Problems, Their Analysis, Their Solutions: Based on the Proposals Formulated by the CIAM* (Cambridge, MA.: Harvard University Press, 1942).

⁴¹ Eric Mumford has noted that *Can Our Cities Survive?* and *The Charter of Athens* 'became the main documents of the CIAM Functional City approach after the war' (Eric Mumford, *Defining Urban Design: CIAM Architects and the Formation of a Discipline, 1937-69* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009), p. 12).

⁴² Sert, p. 2.

⁴³ Sert, p. 4.

⁴⁴ Sert, p. 69.

Louis Cohen has suggested, given planning's prominence, that 'the post-war period began as early as 1942'.⁴⁵ In Britain, official publications supported a propaganda initiative related to questions of planning and housing.⁴⁶ Such governmental publications were, as Geoffrey H. Martin observed, 'a powerful intellectual construct' which 'fed public expectations that the future would be better managed than the recent past had been'.⁴⁷ There were tensions between official initiatives and unofficial publications, with Winston Churchill proving notoriously reticent regarding postwar promises after Lloyd George's promise of homes fit for heroes.⁴⁸ Nonetheless, Lord Reith's call to plan 'boldly and comprehensively' in 1941 while visiting the ruins of Plymouth was followed by a raft of wartime plans for postwar British cities.⁴⁹ Public debate in Britain reiterated the critique of the industrialised city. G. D. H. Cole stated emphatically, 'it is a mistake to think of the post-war housing problem mainly in terms of the making good of bomb damage. [...] Great Britain, well before 1939, already stood in need of extensive re-planning and re-building'.⁵⁰ A series of posters by Abram Games in 1942 visualised this contrast between the past and the future, using icons of modernist architecture and highlighting the key themes of housing, health and education (fig. 3.1.7).⁵¹ In wartime London, the Free French Forces established a

⁴⁵ Jean-Louis Cohen, p. 383.

⁴⁶ These include the Barlow Report on population distribution (1940), the Scott Report on rural land use (1942), and the Uthwatt Report regarding urban development (1942). The Reith Report on New Towns was published in 1946.

⁴⁷ Geoffrey H. Martin, 'Restoration and Reconstruction: Debate and Practice in Britain during and after World War II', in *Stadtzerstörung und Wiederaufbau: Zerstörung durch die Stadtherrschaft, innere Unruhen und Kriege*, ed. by Martin Körner, 3 vols. (Stuttgart: Paul Haupt, 2000), II, 409–22 (p. 415).

⁴⁸ In a speech the day after the signing of the Armistice in November 1918, Lloyd George proclaimed that the British government would build 'habitations fit for heroes who have won the war'.

⁴⁹ Reith's comments were reported in *A Plan for Plymouth* (1943): 'go ahead, planning boldly and comprehensively, go on with good planning and bank on getting financial help' (James Paton Watson and Sir Patrick Abercrombie, *A Plan for Plymouth* (Plymouth: Underhill, 1943), p. vii). *A Plan for Plymouth* exemplifies the difficulty of distinguishing between official and unofficial initiatives regarding propaganda and postwar planning. Published in wartime in an edition of 3500 and again in 1946, it was heavily subsidised and circulated both nationally and internationally. An abbreviated version was produced in 1945 for use in schools (Stephen Essex and Mark Brayshay, 'Vision, Vested Interest and Pragmatism: Who Re-made Britain's Blitzed Cities?', *Planning Perspectives*, 22 (2007), 417–441 (pp. 425–426)). Details of the many British town and city plans published are listed, along with some continental comparators, in Peter J. Larkham and Keith D. Lilley, *Planning the 'City of Tomorrow': British Reconstruction Planning, 1939-1952: An Annotated Bibliography* (Pickering: Inch's Books, 2001).

⁵⁰ G. D. H. Cole, *Building and Planning* (London: Cassell, 1945), pp. 13 & 17.

⁵¹ Fig 3.1.7 juxtaposes run-down tenements with Maxwell Fry's multi-storey Kensal House from 1938. The posters were recalled by Churchill (Elizabeth Darling, *Re-Forming Britain: Narratives of Modernity Before Reconstruction* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2007), p. 209).

number of committees to consider the pertinent problems of the postwar period, including a group concerned with town planning.⁵² Under Vichy, France was first to establish official government bodies charged with reconstruction in 1941. The Délégation Générale à l'Équipement National and the Commissariat à la Reconstruction Immobilière were responsible for planning and reconstruction respectively.⁵³ The division of labour reflected an irresolvable tension between modernism and regionalism in the Vichy perspective which Cohen described as being torn between 'a folkish and reactionary vision of the land and the technocratic prospect of a national infrastructure'.⁵⁴ This tension is reflected in the 'Charter of the Architect for Reconstruction' ('La Charte de l'architecte-reconstructeur', 1941), one of numerous charters and counter-charters of the period which sought to prescribe the terms of debate.⁵⁵ The official German wartime approach to architecture and planning was marked by the same tension, as Jochen Thies noted: the Nazi 'utopian ideal, [being] a curious compound of worship of technology and advocacy of an agrarian society'.⁵⁶ Albert Speer, appointed General Supervisor for the Redevelopment of the Capital of the Reich in January 1937, developed monumental plans for the five *Führerstädte* Hitler envisaged, though these urban redevelopment projects sat uncomfortably with the veneration of racial heritage entwined with notions of the homeland as a rural idyll (*Blut und Boden*).⁵⁷ The neo-classical vision of future Reich cities was pictured in the

⁵² The appropriately-named Pierre Maisonneuve was Chef du Secrétariat des Commissions d'études des problèmes d'après-guerre. Amongst his papers held by the Archives nationales de France are minutes from a meeting of the planning studies group in August 1943 (ANF/72AJ/546, Pierre Maisonneuve (Problèmes d'après-guerre, 1942-1946), Dossier XV, Group d'études d'urbanisme, Procès verbaux de la réunion préparatoire du 27 août 43). Other topics considered by the committees included human rights, education, social security and the establishment of a ministry of culture.

⁵³ The defeat of 1940 was in itself a postwar moment and reconstruction planning and work continued under Vichy as if this was to be the permanent state of affairs. Voldman covers this period from 1940 to 1944 in detail.

⁵⁴ Jean-Louis Cohen, p. 377.

⁵⁵ The charter attempted to abrogate the distinction between modernism and regionalism: 'Above all, avoid asking yourself this question: Should we make a modern or a local architecture? Because those who ask themselves this question show they have not understood the problem.' Rather, the architecte-reconstructeur was urged to steer a path between rationalism and pastiche: 'You will build in the modern spirit, impregnated with that which [...] has withstood time, adapting yourselves to local conditions' (Rémi Baudouï, 'From Tradition to Modernity: The Reconstruction in France', *Rassegna*, ed. by Carlo Olmo, 15 (1993), 68–75 (pp. 69–70)).

⁵⁶ Jochen Thies, 'Hitler's European Building Programme', *Journal of Contemporary History*, 13 (1978), 413–431 (p. 415).

⁵⁷ A comprehensive survey of wartime and postwar plans in Germany is provided in Durth and Gutschow. Thies also suggested that these Nazi city visions were as much a vision of the future as an iconoclastic reaction to the paper architecture of Weimar's past (Thies, 413–431 (p. 419)).

architectural photobook *Neue deutsche Baukunst* (1943), with a foreword by Speer.⁵⁸ While these images of work by architects like Paul Ludwig Troost projected a vision of strength and permanence, the levels of urban destruction in Germany called for the establishment by Speer that same year of a reconstruction taskforce (*Arbeitsstab Wiederaufbau*), members of which would be involved in reconstruction following defeat.

While CIAM did not meet after 1937, some international exchange persisted in the field of architecture and town planning between Axis and Allied countries. As Cohen noted, the International Federation for Housing and Planning, 'continued to operate at reduced levels, but nonetheless their publications circulated between the Allied and the Axis countries, and made the circulation of certain projects for reconstruction possible, even through the tightest barriers'.⁵⁹ Similarly Friedhelm Fischer confirms that, although travel outside Axis nations was not possible for German professionals, in a few places, 'the sources of information never dried up': 'the Hamburg World Economic Archives received information via obscure channels about British reactions to many events relating to Germany (for instance, air raids on Hamburg) but also to matters of planning (Abercrombie's plans for London) and planning legislation under the Churchill government'.⁶⁰ After the war, the Labour government ushered in by the landslide victory of the 1945 general election could draw on the wealth of wartime planning in the task of postwar reconstruction.⁶¹ The situation in France and Germany was more ideologically complex. Nonetheless, in questions of architecture, as in other fields, the end of the war did not constitute a 'zero hour' in any nation. Significant continuities existed. Rebuilt cities often assumed a similar layout since essential infrastructure (gas, electricity, sewers) endured beneath the surface, influencing reconstruction. Likewise, modernist approaches persisted below the surface of the Nazi and Vichy states. Hans Schwippert, for instance, was a member of the Deutscher Werkbund from 1930, continued to teach in Germany during the war, became chief architect for Aachen in October 1944 following the American occupation, and was the first president of the re-founded Deutscher Werkbund in 1947. In 1948, he

⁵⁸ Albert Speer and Rudolf Wolters, *Neue deutsche Baukunst* (Berlin: Volk und Reich Verlag, 1943).

⁵⁹ Jean-Louis Cohen, p. 379.

⁶⁰ Friedhelm Fischer, 'German Reconstruction as an International Activity', in *Rebuilding Europe's Bombed Cities*, ed. by Jeffry M. Diefendorf (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1990), pp. 131–44 (p. 136).

⁶¹ In the UK, the Ministry of Reconstruction was established in November 1943 and disbanded in May 1945. Subsequently, housing was overseen by the Ministry of Health.

was commissioned to design the Bundeshaus in Bonn, parliament of the new Federal Republic.⁶² Similarly, in France, much wartime planning work was the foundation for postwar reconstruction, often overseen post-1945 by planners who had been in post pre-1945. Raoul Dautry, first head of the Ministère de la reconstruction et de l'urbanisme (MRU), 'refused to consider the extensive efforts made in the field of reconstruction under the Vichy regime as useless,' seeking instead a 'continuity of action'.⁶³ Equally, in Germany, as Niels Gutschow has argued in the case of Hamburg, 'With the end of the war the political order changed. The vocabulary of planning was denazified, but the basic implications remained unchanged. [...] It was taken for granted that the pattern of the future settlement was a dispersed one (*aufgelockert*) and that it was organised into neighbourhoods (*gegliedert in Siedlungszellen*).'⁶⁴

As was the case with the interwar promotion of the Modern Movement and with wartime propaganda, photography contributed greatly to the creation of a 'paper architecture' after the war. Using images of buildings already completed, a host of publications and exhibitions created imagined spaces symbolic of the will to rebuild and acting as a psychological crutch in the lacuna between war's end and large-scale reconstruction. Exhibitions included *Berlin Plant* (1946, including Scharoun's radical Kollektivplan⁶⁵) in the bomb-damaged Schloß, which presented various plans for reconstruction, and the *Première exposition de la Reconstruction* (1945, organised by the MRU). Carter and Goldfinger's paperback on the London Plan exemplifies the publications. In numerous books, journals, treatises and exhibitions, the war and the depression were consistently imagined together and the Modern Movement was

⁶² See Hartmut Frank, 'The Late Victory of Neues Bauen: German Architecture After World War II', *Rassegna*, ed. by Carlo Olmo, 15 (1993), 58–67 (p. 58).

⁶³ Baudouï, 68–75 (pp. 70–1).

⁶⁴ Niels Gutschow, 'Hamburg: The 'Catastrophe' of July 1943', in *Rebuilding Europe's Bombed Cities*, ed. by Jeffry M. Diefendorf (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1990), pp. 114–130 (pp. 125–6). Gutschow's comments reference Johannes Gödertiz, Hubert Hoffmann and Ronald Rainer's *Die gegliederte und aufgelockerte Stadt*, published in 1945 and reissued in 1957 (for further discussion of this example see: Francesca Rogier, 'The Monumentality of Rhetoric: The Will to Rebuild in Postwar Berlin', in *Anxious Modernisms: Experimentation in Postwar Architectural Culture*, ed. by Sarah Williams Goldhagen and Réjean Legault (Cambridge, MA.: MIT Press, 2002), pp. 165–90; Diefendorf, *In the Wake of War*, p. 122). Durth has noted the different approaches to reconstruction of the four occupying powers in the early postwar years (Durt, I, 480–487 (p. 480)).

⁶⁵ One of the most radical postwar plans, Rogier has described the Kollektivplan as the 'focal point' of the *Berlin plant* exhibition, 'seen as a highly symbolic plea for physical and spiritual renewal in the midst of wreckage' (Rogier, pp. 165–90 (p. 168)).

offered up as the solution to this dual problem.⁶⁶ Architectural photography of modernist architecture and aerial photography, coupled with declarations about town planning, provided the counter-image to those of ruins and slums; the former presenting the positive alternative to the latter's negative state of affairs. Another example is Max Bill's *Wiederaufbau: Dokumente über Zerstörungen, Planungen und Konstruktionen* (1945), an international survey of literature, building methods and design principles, ranging over France, Germany and Britain, as well as the United States, the Soviet Union, Switzerland, Italy, Poland and others (fig. 3.1.8).⁶⁷ Bill outlined three elements to the challenge of reconstruction: essential emergency work, economic rehabilitation, and spiritual and cultural reconstruction. The most pressing issue was the construction of housing which, he argued, must underpin any community.⁶⁸ The publication is well-illustrated with plans, drawings and photographs, including an image from the *Leipziger Illustrierte* of rubble processing (fig. 3.1.9) and of temporary accommodation in a bombed area of Roubaix (fig. 3.1.10) with a sketch for a housing project by Alfred Roth superimposed on the background. This superimposition is a graphic example of the iconoclastic manner in which images of modernist architecture were used to *overwrite* the image of both slums and ruins.⁶⁹

At war's end – through propagandising on behalf of the Modern Movement, unofficial commentaries and state-sponsored initiatives – the terms 'planning' and 'reconstruction' had acquired a powerful currency. Both were fuzzy concepts, their indeterminacy contributing to their quasi-virulent circulation. Postwar, 'planning' was a heavily-freighted concept integral to ideas of rebirth of the various war-devastated nations. Town planning was just one prominent facet encompassed by this elastic concept.⁷⁰ Like economic planning, social planning, and even family planning, town

⁶⁶ For instance, the British Town and Country Planning Act (1947) was known as the Blitz and Blight Act.

⁶⁷ Max Bill, *Wiederaufbau: Dokumente über Zerstörungen, Planungen und Konstruktionen* (Zurich: Verlag für Architektur, 1945).

⁶⁸ 'Das weitaus auffälligste Problem [...] ist die Schaffung neuer Wohngelegenheiten für Hunderttausend den Obdachlosen, denn ohne geregelte Wohnungsverhältnisse ist jeder organische Aufbau eines Gemeinwesens undenkbar.'

⁶⁹ Roth's image is reminiscent of similar photocollages made by Le Corbusier (Plan Voisin for Paris, 1925) and Ludwig Hilberseimer (Plan for Friedrichstraße, Berlin, 1928). All three overlay images of new modernist structures over photographs of the industrial city. Christopher Klemek has remarked on the 'iconoclastic shock value' of such plans, describing them as 'a powerful *Leitbild*' or 'guiding vision' (Christopher Klemek, *The Transatlantic Collapse of Urban Renewal: Postwar Urbanism from New York to Berlin* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2011), pp. 24 & 28).

⁷⁰ Cohen has written of 'the elasticity of planning' (Jean-Louis Cohen, p. 376).

planning could be managed better by active states committed to the welfare of their populations.⁷¹ Every credible state or organisation needed a postwar plan. In the first issue of a new periodical, *Reconstruction: Revue mensuelle internationale*, Raoul Dautry is pictured at his desk.⁷² Alongside photographs of ruined towns is a facsimile of his handwritten five point programme. The Minister of Reconstruction and Planning is pictured in the symbolic act of planning for the future; a counter-image to the present situation represented by the ruins. In short, planning was, as Tony Judt remarked, 'the political religion of post-war Europe.'⁷³ Likewise, 'reconstruction' was an indeterminate and powerful concept, referring not simply to rebuilding physical spaces, but to the broader project of creating new social orders. It carried forward notions of reform inherent in interwar town planning and housing campaigns. Debates about the meaning of 'reconstruction' came to the surface in all three comparator countries postwar. In France, official publications discussed 'la reconstruction proprement dite'.⁷⁴ In Britain, there was talk of 'reconstruction in its widest sense'.⁷⁵ In Germany, the propriety of 'Aufbau' or 'Neuaufbau' (construction or new construction) was argued over 'Wiederaufbau' (construction as before or again).⁷⁶ Beyond Europe, 'reconstruction' was also an influential concept in the discussion of urban space for countries not materially damaged by war.⁷⁷

⁷¹ Jules Lubbock has noted the currency of the 'planning' label, stating that in 1939 the British National Birth Control Council renamed itself the Family Planning Association: 'In the view of many who wished to prevent further suburban sprawl there was a direct connection between family planning and land-use planning' (Jules Lubbock, '1947 and All That: Why Has the Act Lasted So Long?', in *Man-Made Future: Planning, Education and Design in Mid-Twentieth-Century Britain*, ed. by Iain Boyd Whyte (Abingdon: Routledge, 2007), pp. 1–15 (p. 2)).

⁷² *Reconstruction: Revue mensuelle internationale*, 1 (1945), 7–9.

⁷³ Judt, *Postwar*, p. 67.

⁷⁴ Ministère de la reconstruction et de l'urbanisme, *Les Problèmes du logement et la reconstruction*, La Documentation française illustrée, 49 (Paris: La Documentation française, 1951), p. 14.

⁷⁵ G. M. Kallman, 'The Life Theme', *Architectural Review*, 608 (1947), p. 68.

⁷⁶ Hans Schmitt, for instance, argued that 'the image of the future city' must spring from a rethinking urban space, not simply fall back on 'images inherited from the past' ('das neue zukünftige Bild der Stadt muß einer *eigenen, autonomen Konzeption* entspringen. Sonst kann nicht erwarten werden, daß eine Ganzheit zustande kommt'), (Hans Schmitt, *Der Neuaufbau der Stadt Köln* (Cologne: B. Pick, 1946), p. 5).

⁷⁷ Cohen has remarked on its currency in the US: 'Reconstruction was a galvanising term for mobilisation, even in cities that were beyond the reach of Axis bombers, such as those in the United States' (Jean-Louis Cohen, p. 372). Fischer has commented on its currency in Australia: 'The importance of the term reconstruction throughout the 1940s in all industrialised nations, whether affected by wartime destruction or not [...] to encompass a complete restructuring and rejuvenating of society. One moved from building directly to politics and morality' (Fischer, pp. 131–44 (p. 133)).

In the three comparator countries, modernist architecture (subsuming town planning) had become intimately connected with these intellectual constructs of 'planning' and 'reconstruction'. If planning was the political religion of postwar Europe, modernist architecture attained the status of a holy rite: it symbolised the act of planning made concrete; it promised to transform the notion of reconstruction into the physical spaces and places of a brighter future. Sarah Williams Goldhagen has drawn attention to the ideological boost which modernist architecture received in the postwar period: 'By the time workers began clearing the rubble from the cities bombed during the war, modernism had emerged as the architectural language symbolizing democratic aspirations, becoming the common datum from which many emerging postwar practitioners and theorists began their search for an architectural identity'.⁷⁸ The emigration of many modernist architects from continental Europe to Britain or the United States helped spread the influence (and substantiate Johnson and Hitchcock's title) of the International Style. Additionally, through its status as the 'the enemy's enemy'⁷⁹ (excoriated as it was by fascists and communists), modernist architecture's association with democracy was embedded. This is not to say that photography was the only visual material which propelled modernist architecture into this privileged position in postwar Western Europe. Maps, plans, sketches and other images were frequently employed. Goldfinger's comment on the opportunity of the Blitz, for instance, appears next to sketches of a ruined church by Gordon Cullen.⁸⁰ Photography, however, was the dominant mode of representation in that – and this is the kernel of the argument made here – it directed the terms of the debate and directly impacted on the practice of architecture. Sarah M. Dreier highlighted that professional photographers of architecture working for architects and the architectural press only emerged as a distinct entity in the late 1930s: 'It is not coincidental that the International Style gained popularity and influence at the same time that a few talented

⁷⁸ Sarah Williams Goldhagen, 'Introduction: Critical Themes of Postwar Modernism', in *Anxious Modernisms: Experimentation in Postwar Architectural Culture*, ed. by Sarah Williams Goldhagen and Réjean Legault (Cambridge, MA.: MIT Press, 2002), pp. 11–24 (p. 16).

⁷⁹ Klemek, p. 38.

⁸⁰ For instance, on the isotope and the work of Otto Neurath see: Iain Boyd Whyte, 'Otto Neurath and the Sociology of Happiness', in *Man-Made Future: Planning, Education and Design in Mid-Twentieth-Century Britain*, ed. by Iain Boyd Whyte (Abingdon: Routledge, 2007), pp. 16–37; Michelle Henning, 'Living Life In Pictures: Isotype As Modernist Cultural Practice', *New Formations*, 70 (2011), 41–59; Nader Vossoughian, *Otto Neurath: The Language of the Global Polis* (Rotterdam: NAI Publishers, 2008).

photographers started to specialize in architectural images'.⁸¹ What is required of analysis is to draw out the implications of this conjuncture.

The foregoing survey of propagandising on behalf of the Modern Movement highlights the combined role of the camera and the aeroplane in making modernist architecture the foundation of a vision of the future city. The view from above, the legacy of slums, the fear of attack, the image of ruins – these elements recur time and again in wartime, driving and shaping architectural debate, influencing ways of looking at urban space, architecture and housing. They are all implicated in the visualisation of modernist architecture as *the* solution to the architectural demands of the postwar period in Western Europe. The elasticity of planning, reconstruction in its widest sense, destruction as opportunity, visual metaphors, the lauding of creative destruction, and the instrumentalisation of the aerial view, ruin imagery and architectural photography – it is within this specific intellectual framework and visual culture that Carter and Goldfinger's rallying-call must be understood. It proclaimed that the Blitz 'cleared our vision', that further demolition and planning was demanded, that a re-imagining was needed for the future, not simply rebuilding. The legacy of both the war and half a century's propagandising for modernist architecture is distilled in this articulation of a specific way of looking at towns and cities. It is equally well exemplified by an aerial photograph used in Thomas Sharp's *Oxford Replanned* (1948).⁸² A Luftwaffe reconnaissance photograph, it shows Oxford through the lens of potential destruction, although the town was never bombed (fig. 3.1.11). Postwar, all urban space, bomb-damaged or not, was subject to the surveying eye of planners, architects and politicians.

In an introduction to *The New Architecture in Britain, 1946-1953* (1953), President of the Town Planning Institute, William Holford, considered the new role of global communication in architectural debate of the postwar period which distinguished it from that of previous eras:

The twentieth century has evolved its own peculiar arts of publicity and its own standards of architectural criticism. Both are highly powered in terms of range and speed and frequency. [...] To-day, professional

⁸¹ Sarah M. Dreller, 'Architectural Photography', in *Encyclopedia of 20th Century Architecture*, ed. by R. Stephen Sennott, 3 vols. (New York: Fitzroy Dearborn, 2004), I, 59–61 (p. 60).

⁸² Thomas Sharp, *Oxford Replanned* (London: Architectural Press, 1948).

architects in this country number more than 16,000. Every week they are fed with news, photographs and technical information. The delight of this critic and the irritation of that is conveyed at once to multitudes of architects who have never seen the work under discussion nor shared the feelings of those who commissioned it. A new *brise soleil* from Brazil, or a precast concrete panel from Pretoria, may reappear simultaneously on a dozen drawing boards in Western Europe and the U.S.A. in a matter of weeks from the date of their first construction.⁸³

Exemplifying 'this continuous and intensive programme of international communication', the book was published with captions in English, French and German. However, Holford felt this cross-cultural exchange was having a dramatic impact on architectural practice: 'previous local or regional boundaries are infinitely extended by it, and imitation in a wide field may take the place of invention in a small one'.⁸⁴ Thus, visual material attained the status of 'an international medium of expression'⁸⁵ in globally circulating professional journals, bringing closer a homogenous modernist architecture. Architectural photography, in this cross-national debate of the postwar period, promoted the shift towards modernism which affected ways of viewing, talking about and conceptualising architecture and urban space, ultimately opening up the possibilities pursued in the housing construction of the later 1950s and 1960s. Thus, in the first postwar decade, reconstruction segued into a continuous process of urban renewal, arguments for which had been advanced since Howard and had found their most persuasive tool in photography.

A number of developments – formative and symbolic – marked the start of reconstruction in earnest at the end of the 1940s. In Britain, there was the Town and Country Planning Act of 1947. In West Germany, the currency reform of 1948 and, following the establishment of the Federal Republic, the passing of the first housing act in 1950. In France, the end of what Voldman termed 'le temps provisoire' occurred at the same time.⁸⁶ The Marshall Plan, while it stressed industry, trade and individual consumption – not the sorts of collective consumption represented by public housing

⁸³ William Holford, 'Introduction', in *The New Architecture in Great Britain, 1946-1953*, ed. by Edward D. Mills (London: Standard Catalogue Company, 1953), pp. 5–7 (pp. 5–6).

⁸⁴ Holford, pp. 5–7 (p. 6).

⁸⁵ Holford, pp. 5–7 (p. 7).

⁸⁶ Voldman, p. 144.

projects or the wider welfare state initiatives – also marked a key moment in the postwar period. It was a psychological boost which made credible the notion of recovery.⁸⁷ Another symbolic event was the sixth CIAM congress which met in Bridgwater, England, in September 1947; its theme, the reconstruction of cities. It was the first meeting in nearly a decade. Sert was elected the new president of the organisation and a restatement of the organisation's aims was issued which reinterpreted the Sarraz Declaration for the postwar era. It noted the acceptance of 'social planning' around the world, asserted modernist architecture's contribution to this transnational project and pledged 'to work for the creation of a physical environment that will satisfy man's emotional and material needs and stimulate his spiritual growth'.⁸⁸ Yet, while CIAM members and other modernist-influenced architects would create progressive housing architecture in the first postwar decade, ultimately this aim of meeting both material and emotional needs would be thwarted in the second. Having excavated the discursive construction of the architectural solutions envisaged for the postwar housing crisis, analysis turns next to questions of visibility, agency and iconoclasm in the postwar debate about housing. What this analysis will demonstrate is that the transplantation and application of modernist architectural ideas and forms of the interwar period to the postwar problems took place in a debate and practice dominated by photography, pervaded by a vocabulary of visibility and governed by this ocularcentrism.

⁸⁷ Diefendorf has noted that Marshall Plan aid did not contribute significantly to the cost of urban reconstruction in West Germany, with only 1.63% of the DM 31.6bn invested in housing between 1950 and 1954 coming from Marshall Plan funds (Diefendorf, 1, 587–93 (p. 590)). Judt described the contribution made by Marshall Plan aid as 'not just economic and political; it was also and perhaps above all psychological' (Tony Judt, 'Introduction', in *The Marshall Plan: Fifty Years After*, ed. by Martin A. Schain (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2001), pp. 1–9 (p. 7)).

⁸⁸ Congrès Internationaux d'Architecture Moderne, 'Reaffirmation of the Aims of CIAM', in *Architecture Culture, 1943-1968: A Documentary Anthology*, ed. by Joan Ockman (New York: Rizzoli, 1993), pp. 101–2.

3.2 *The Ministry, the Maestro & Marseille: Le Corbusier's Unité d'habitation*

Architecture has nothing to do with the various “styles” ... Architecture is the masterly, correct and magnificent play of masses brought together in light. Our eyes are made to see forms in light; light and shade reveal these forms; cubes, cones, spheres, cylinders or pyramids are the great primary forms which light reveals to advantage; the image of these is distinct and tangible within us and without ambiguity.

Le Corbusier⁸⁹

In August 1945, Corbusier received his most important public commission to date when he was invited by the MRU to submit sketches for a housing block in Marseille. The first stone was laid on 14 October 1947 and the Unité d'habitation building on the Boulevard Michelet was inaugurated on 14 October 1952. But this experimental building – a radical slab of exposed concrete, 17 storeys high, housing 337 apartments of 23 different styles, as well as shops, a gymnasium, hotel, kindergarten and an open-air swimming pool – was certainly not representative of a MRU ‘house style’ in the first postwar decade. Historians of French postwar reconstruction consider a binary opposition of traditional and modernist architecture (of regionalism and functionalism) unhelpful in describing the dominant aesthetic trends. Baudouï noted that, ‘while the resistance movement of the OCM (Organisation civile et militaire) had stood up for CIAM by appealing to the Charter of Athens, the French liberation did not announce the hegemony of the Modern Movement in French reconstruction’.⁹⁰ The MRU thus emphasised modern town planning (reflected in central oversight) with an architecture sensitive to context (suggested by regional development). This was enshrined in the Charte de l’urbanisme (conceived and published under Dautry as a counterforce to the Athens Charter), the result of which was to make ‘eclecticism the official aesthetic doctrine’.⁹¹ Nonetheless, as will be argued here, through the photographic

⁸⁹ Le Corbusier, *Towards a New Architecture*, trans. by Frederick Etchells (New York: Dover, 1986), pp. 25 & 29.

⁹⁰ Rémi Baudouï, ‘Between Regionalism and Functionalism: French Reconstruction from 1940 to 1945’, in *Rebuilding Europe's Bombed Cities*, ed. by Jeffry M. Diefendorf (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1990), pp. 31–47 (p. 45).

⁹¹ Baudouï, 68–75 (p. 71).

representation of projects like the exceptional Unité building and other more modest public housing in a regionally-inflected style, the modernist high-rise housing block was to become a defining aspect of French cityscapes, culminating in the *grands ensembles*, the proposed solution to France's continuing housing problem after the first postwar decade and into the 1970s.

Se loger (fig. 3.2.1), an official publication issued by La Documentation française in 1949, articulated and visualised the various factors held responsible for the housing crisis.⁹² Dramatic images of Brest (fig. 3.2.2) and Saint-Lô demonstrate the war's impact, while the text stated 2,000,000 buildings were still to be repaired. Additionally, an image of a crowded and dilapidated room in a tenement (fig. 3.2.3) and three full page images of urban courtyards illustrated the poor housing conditions which were the legacy of the interwar period (figs. 3.2.4 to 6). In an accusatory tone the reader is told, 'Today, the situation is frightening: the housing shortage is getting worse because of the uneven distribution of property.'⁹³ Thus, collaborating with the text, the ruin and slum photographs present three factors as the cause of the housing crisis: the prewar economy, the war, and social inequality. The condition of extant housing is represented as demanding both planning and reconstruction in the broad sense outlined in the previous section. The counter-image to squalor and ruination is offered by, amongst other elements, photographs of a modern kitchen (fig. 3.2.7), a model of an interior from the new Marseille housing block (fig. 3.2.8) and the reconstructed town of Saint-Cyr (fig. 3.2.9). The juxtaposition of these latter images with those of ruins and slums make meaningful the modernist architecture that will replace it. Between the two, they shape the terms of the contrast: air, space and light are both the key words in the text and key characteristics of the imagery. In the photographs of the cramped and tawdry slums (*les taudis*), it is exactly air, space and light that are notable by their absence, in marked contrast to the modern buildings and estates depicted. On one hand is the harsh light of a naked bulb and the sky obscured from the claustrophobic courtyard; on the other, the marked sense of depth in the kitchen, created by the strong

⁹² Ministère de la reconstruction et de l'urbanisme, *Se loger*, La Documentation française illustrée, 26 (Paris: La Documentation française, 1949). La Documentation française is a government body which, like the British HMSO (Her Majesty's Stationery Office), publishes official documentation, including legislation and governmental information for the public domain.

⁹³ 'Aujourd'hui la situation est angoissante: le manqué de logements s'aggrave encore en raison de leur inégale repartition' (Ministère de la reconstruction et de l'urbanisme, *Se loger*, p. 3). More than 35,000 Parisian families of three, four or five members – the text continued – are living in one room properties, while 26,000 single people or married couples without children are living in properties with five or six rooms.

oblique lines of the uncluttered counter and the vertical lines of the brightly-lit cabinets. The pristine model of the interior of the housing block makes the same allusions, with strong shadows emphasising the light streaming into the sparsely furnished space. Similarly, the elevated view of the housing blocks highlights the space around each building.⁹⁴

These interconnected notions of air, space and light are reiterated and repeated in the text and images of many other publications from the first postwar decade. They are the defining characteristic (through absence or emphasis) of the photographic illustrations and they become – as explicitly acknowledged – the factors which inform design in the task of reconstruction. The limits of photographic technology are inscribed in the images of *les taudis*; they are grainy images which, with bisected heads and awkward perspectives, poorly convey the spaces captured. In contrast, the modern spaces photograph well. The modern kitchen, the model of the experimental building, the housing blocks – they all offer a vivid and compelling counter-image to those of *les taudis* which is light and spacious. Thus, what are principally technical concerns for the photographer – getting the right light, finding the right position within a space from which to photograph it, creating a sense of space – also become the defining terms of the housing problem, giving shape to debate of the topic in the public sphere by dint of the key characteristics, not of housing, but of the image-making process of photography.

The emphasis on air, space and light is not itself novel in the period. Nor is the relevance of photography to this discourse. For instance, in his discussion of Leeds slum clearance and photography in the nineteenth century, John Tagg notes that ‘the very clutteredness and obscurity of the images argues for another space: a clear space, a healthy space, a space of unobstructed lines of sight, open to vision’.⁹⁵ What is distinct about this ocularcentrism vis-à-vis postwar French housing is the conjunction of a proliferation of photographic imagery in the public sphere with the sense of an opportunity to make radical change following the destruction of war. The confluence of these factors resulted in an emphasis on the visual and the spatial over other concerns – note the absence of individuals in these positive images, with the exception of the

⁹⁴ *See Loger* also included images of a transnational selection of interwar modernist buildings, stressing these same characteristics of light, air and space.

⁹⁵ Tagg, concerned with questions of power and surveillance, also added ‘and supervision’ (John Tagg, *The Burden of Representation: Essays on Photographies and Histories* (Basingstoke: Macmillan Education, 1988), p. 151).

woman, installed in the gendered space of the new, technologically advanced kitchen. Moreover, the scale of reconstruction required and the momentum generated by its ideological significance meant that the terms of the debate were to have implications far greater than the efforts of nineteenth-century reformers.

These spatial and visual terms are framed by the invocation of the unity of the nation. The final line of the pamphlet states, 'The rehabilitation of our housing stock is a problem of solidarity and cooperation,' recalling De Gaulle's effort to craft a unified national identity discussed in chapter one.⁹⁶ The French term ('notre patrimoine immobilier') entails both an allusion to time and to community not captured in the English phrase 'housing stock'. There is an important invocation of keeping in trust that is suggested by the French term – the notion of heritage at once looking back to the past and forwards to the future, implying a community with both ancestors from whom you have inherited and successors to whom you will bequeath.⁹⁷ The idea of community and solidarity finds its visual expression here in a work in progress: Le Corbusier's Unité d'habitation tower block under construction in Marseille, the final image in the publication. (Intriguingly, there is no one actually working on the building; the implicit suggestion being that the building is taking shape as much as anything due to a collective, national force of will.) The importance of the collective is also reflected in Le Corbusier's name for his building which, like the solidity of its concrete frame, suggests cohesion and solidarity.⁹⁸ In this manner, modernist architecture is again

⁹⁶ 'Le relèvement de notre patrimoine immobilier est un problème de solidarité et de coopération' (Ministère de la reconstruction et de l'urbanisme, *Se loger*, p. 29). Sheila Crane offers another parallel between architecture and the wider postwar project of national reconciliation and reinvention in France – one which works to erase traces of the immediate past in the built environment, rather than stress continuity with the past and projection into the future as implied by the notion of heritage. Discussing areas of the Marseille port dynamited by the Germans in January 1943 with the endorsement of the Vichy regime, Crane has written of an 'architectural *épuration*': 'Like the nationwide efforts in the immediate postwar period to punish select high-profile officials for their collaboration with the Germans as a means of both institutionally and symbolically "purifying" the resurrected French Republic, the rapid elimination of rubble and scarred building façades was a means of physically wiping away the material traces of both the war and the Vichy regime.' Fourteen hundred of those evicted from the area in 1943 were subsequently sent to concentrations camps (Sheila Crane, 'Digging up the Present in Marseille's Old Port: Toward an Archaeology of Reconstruction', *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians*, 63 (2004), 296–319 (pp. 303 & 299)).

⁹⁷ It is hard to imagine comparable terms being used in the context of British debate about public housing in the postwar decade. However, recent efforts like those of the Twentieth Century Society now seek to preserve the architectural heritage of the Modern Movement.

⁹⁸ 'L'Unité d'habitation' has the prosaic meaning of 'housing unit' or 'housing block'. It also implies the more poetic notion, 'the unity of living'. Critics of the building referred to it as the house of the madman ('la maison du fada'). In the English language version of the French magazine *Réalités*, it was termed a 'rabbit-warren in Technicolour' (*Realities*, 'Marseille: In the

presented as the answer to the problem of prewar inequalities *and* wartime devastation. The cultural values of the reconstruction architecture – solidarity through solidity, unity through the housing unit – are visually, as well as verbally, constructed by publications such as *Se loger*.

To manage the nation's perception of its projects, the MRU undertook extensive work to assemble a photographic record of both the ruins and the reconstruction. These images – many of which circulated in the public sphere through books and pamphlets, or in exhibitions and articles placed in the press – now constitute the photothèque or photo-library of the MRU (and latterly the Ministère de reconstruction et logement, established in 1953), which comprise 320 albums, 53,000 black and white negatives and 40,000 prints.⁹⁹ The first postwar decade was an intense period of activity, as evidenced by the fact that nearly 30,000 of these images had been taken by 1956.¹⁰⁰ The MRU commissioned photographers to document the postwar state of architecture and urban space, as well as receiving images from the various *départements* as recovery progressed. It came to include ruin images, pictures of slums, and key modernist buildings of from before the war, (figs. 3.2.10 to 3.2.13) with an emphasis on modernist architecture, industrialised and standardised means of construction, and solutions to the housing problem. While it may be hard to determine the exact manner in which the collection of images assembled came to include, for instance, a photograph of the Unité building by Willy Ronis,¹⁰¹ it is clear, as Dominique Gauthey has noted, that despite the varying clarity, subject and style of the images, the collection had a coherence determined by its governmental sponsor, anxious for tangible progress in reconstruction and to be able to report this to the nation.¹⁰² As in British wartime and postwar plans, the images of the MRU appeared in combination

heart of Europe's millionaire playground lies one of the most hard-working ports in the world', 21 (1952), 22-31 (p. 25).

⁹⁹ These are held by the Archives nationales de France (ANF/F14/18261 to /18365, Photothèque du ministère de la construction). I am grateful to Sophie Le Goëdec for her assistance in viewing them. Images created by the MRU and MRL are also held by the Institut français d'architecture, which has a selection of photographs mounted on aluminium sheets for exhibition purposes (Fonds Expositions MRU, 227/lfa).

¹⁰⁰ Dominique Gauthey, 'Les archives de la reconstruction, 1945-1979', *Études photographiques*, 1997, para. 3 & 10 of 24 <<http://etudesphotographiques.revues.org/index97.html>> [accessed 4 October 2011].

¹⁰¹ The dossiers of images bear the marks of various reorganisations, re-categorisations and reuses over the years. The image of the Unité building by Ronis in July 1952 bears two codes (16463 and 13569). It is in the following folder: F/14/18291. Dossier 2. 'A. B.D. Rhone, Marseille, Le Corbusier et Le vieux Port. 13.

¹⁰² Gauthey, para. 6 of 24.

with extensive statistics, maps and other visualisations of problems and progress. In these visualisations of the task and progress of reconstruction is revealed the intentionality or agency of the photographic archive generated the MRU. The images, as Gauthey argued, do not in any simple manner record reconstruction; they are themselves a tool in the conceptualisation of reconstruction as a postwar refashioning of national self-image, in which the act of planning public welfare and happiness needed to be seen to be at the heart of the provision of public housing.¹⁰³

Notwithstanding the effort by the MRU of mobilising photography in the task of public relations, Le Corbusier was rarely satisfied with the manner in which his buildings were represented in official or unofficial publications. However, in the photographs of Lucien Hervé, the architect found something to be effusive about. In an often quoted letter to the photographer about a portfolio of pictures taken of the Unité building under construction in December 1949, Le Corbusier praised Hervé for knowing 'how to see architecture'.¹⁰⁴ Many of Hervé's images appeared the following year in a special edition of the journal, *Le Point*, containing an extended treatise on the building by Le Corbusier and a diversity of visual material, including sketches, plans and over forty photographs (some credited to Robert Doisneau and the MRU). The overall effect – as with many of Le Corbusier's numerous books – was to manufacture an air of authority and the image of a creative genius, through a cocktail of poetic diction, invocations of rationality, denunciation of his critics, and dynamic visual content, including photography.¹⁰⁵

The special issue of *Le Point* attempts to historicise the Unité building, framing it by invocations of a specific past and vision of the future. While this representational strategy echoes the notion of 'notre patrimoine immobilier,' the terms are more dramatically posed in the visual material of Le Corbusier's publication. Fig. 3.2.14 shows the contents page of the publication. Two contrasting images are presented: an

¹⁰³ Gauthey, para. 18 & 19 of 24.

¹⁰⁴ This letter is held by the Fondation Le Corbusier: 'Vous avez une âme d'architecte et vous savez voir l'architecture' (FLC/E2–4–219). Corbusier subsequently commissioned Hervé to photograph both his new projects and his previous work. Véronique Boone has highlighted Hervé's role in Le Corbusier's self-promotion in Britain and Germany, through film as well as photography (Véronique Boone, 'The Epic of the Marseilles Block Through the Eye of the Camera', *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians*, 68 (2009), 125–8).

¹⁰⁵ Catherine de Smet has edited an illustrated survey of the over sixty books published by Le Corbusier (Catherine de Smet, *Le Corbusier: Architect of Books* (Baden: Lars Müller Publishers, 2005)).

old print of a family gathered round the hearth and a striking photograph of architectural detail. These images create a specific identity for the building – a modern, progressive, future-focused image which draws on tradition for inspiration, even as its form looks to the future. The print connects the building to an idealised tradition of the home as meeting point, the space of social interaction. It is an obviously historic artefact in its own right, but to reinforce this allusion to historical precedent the caption speaks explicitly of the ‘long standing tradition’ of the family gathering.¹⁰⁶ The photograph provides an intimation of the future. Its style of representation – the frame of the building, captured in high-contrast black and white, aggressively cutting across the space of the image and towering over the trees – invokes a progressive identity for the building through striking composition emphasising form over the naturalistic representation of the space of the building and its setting. The caption, in support, characterizes the building as the ‘aesthetic realisation’ of a robust and rational approach to reinforced concrete.¹⁰⁷ In addition, it states that the material of the building will weather in time to resemble the surrounding mountains which contributed the aggregates for its concrete construction. Significantly, this framing of the building as something both truly modern, but also based in tradition and literally grounded in its location, is expressed in terms of the look of the structure. Image and text consistently stress the visuality of the Unité building.¹⁰⁸

Yet, the main subject of the book is not really the building at Marseille. Its chief concern is the architect’s vision and the portrayal of Le Corbusier as visionary. The photographs of Hervé help craft this image of the architect, providing instead of clear visual information on the building, striking compositions which focus on details. Fig. 3.2.15, for instance, shows a double page spread which – while providing much less than a clear view of the entire building – provides dramatic snippets or vignettes, through the textured surfaces bathed in light and transected by dark shadows. It is presumably this emphasis on a creative vision (rather than a more transparent, documentary-style view of the building) which attracted Corbusier, fitting as it did his style of self-promoting publication. Illustrating an article in *Architecture d’aujourd’hui*

¹⁰⁶ “‘Le feu’ ... ‘le foyer’ ... siège de la plus lointaine tradition. La famille, dans sa totalité, s’y rassemble. (Vieille gravure anglaise)”, (Le Corbusier, *L’Unité d’habitation de Marseille*, Le Point, 38 (Mulhouse: Le Point, 1950), p. 2).

¹⁰⁷ ‘Manifestation esthétique d’un robuste, sain et loyal employ du béton armé’ (Le Corbusier, *L’Unité d’habitation de Marseille*, p. 3).

¹⁰⁸ Proposing yet another charter or counter-charter, Le Corbusier called here for a charter of housing (a ‘Charte de l’habitat’), which addressed the assumed need to teach people how to dwell in the new building (Le Corbusier, *L’Unité d’habitation de Marseille*, pp. 10–13).

concerning the Unité building, an often reproduced portrait of Le Corbusier by Hervé (fig. 3.2.16) shows the architect with a representation of his system of proportion, the Modulor, cast in concrete.¹⁰⁹ In his book, *The Modulor* (1948), Le Corbusier claimed to have derived a system of proportion from the human body which gave harmony to architectural spaces.¹¹⁰ The image in *Architecture d'aujourd'hui* again portrays Le Corbusier as the visionary architect, devising order and harmony with the common man in mind, not simply building public housing.

In *Experiencing Architecture* (1958), Steen Eiler Rasmussen gave a lengthy (and sarcastic) description of Le Corbusier's system of proportion.¹¹¹ The Marseilles block, Rasmussen conceded, had 'real greatness' which made other buildings 'seem strangely petty in comparison'.¹¹² However, the critic contends, the building makes a 'strong impression' not because of harmonious proportion, but because of its 'gigantic scale'.¹¹³ Monumentality, not proportion, accounts for its impact. This critique of the Modulor's dubious rationality and harmony is illustrated with Rasmussen's own image of the human form cast in concrete of the Unité building (fig. 3.2.17). The contrast between Hervé's studied image of Le Corbusier and Rasmussen's irreverent take highlights the manner in which the image of the architect, the architect's own pronouncements and the image of the building collaborate with each other. Photography is vital to the complementary relation between the public image of Le Corbusier and of his work. Rasmussen's photograph and ironic tone are like a pin brandished by a mischievous child who wants to burst a balloon. He wants to prick the central role of image, photography and vision in the architectural discourse and practice of the postwar decade. Playful though the execution may be, it is a serious

¹⁰⁹ 'L'Unité d'habitation Le Corbusier à Marseille', *Architecture d'aujourd'hui*, 46 (1953) 12-21 (p. 12).

¹¹⁰ The book was reissued in an expanded edition the following decade, in which Le Corbusier analysed the use of the Modulor system in the Unité building (Le Corbusier, *The Modulor: A Harmonious Measure to the Human Scale Universally Applicable to Architecture and Mechanics* (London: Faber and Faber, 1954), pp. 132-153).

¹¹¹ Rasmussen suggests the numbers – extended up and down – provide an infinite set of digits to choose from, and yet, 'still you would seek vainly for a measurement for anything so simple as the height of a door or the length of a bed'. In a wry aside that suggested an element of architectural quackery, Rasmussen asserted, 'You feel that antiquity with its combination of religious mysticism and artistic intuition lives on in this man who, for many people, stands as the representative of rational clarity and modern thought' (Steen Eiler Rasmussen, *Experiencing Architecture* (Cambridge, MA.: MIT Press, 1959), pp. 116 & 114).

¹¹² Rasmussen, p. 118.

¹¹³ Rasmussen, pp. 118-9.

point suggested in the book's title which stresses an alternative to the ocularcentric approach to architecture and urban planning.

As well as an aerial photograph of the Marseille block, the same double page spread from *Architecture d'aujourd'hui* includes an image quite distinct from Hervé's striking photos of the building (fig. 3.2.18). Credited to Pierre Liénard, the photograph shows the east façade. With no other buildings or landscape features in the background and without obvious perspectival distortion, it renders the building as a geometric pattern, flattened onto the surface of the page. This image itself was widely circulated and this photographic style was to become more prominent by the mid 1950s – both will be discussed later in the chapter. Suffice to say here it shows the distinction between the style of photography Corbusier was drawn to for his work and the more mainstream architectural photography of the period. Olivier Beer has commented on the rejection by the magazine *Plaisir de France* of an original photo essay on the Unité building by Hervé: 'what was true for *Plaisir de France* was also true for many other journals, which held that architectural photography should be purely informative and strictly limited to frontal views'.¹¹⁴ As well as professional journals and popular magazines, such 'purely informative' images were prominent in the official publications of La Documentation française. But tracing the image of the Unité building over a variety of publications, it is clear Hervé's images did find an audience through a range of publications. Moreover, the representational strategies of architectural photography are shown to be more complicated than allowed by Beer's opposition between 'a very special magic' or 'poetry', on the one hand, and purely 'informative' representation, on the other.¹¹⁵ The Unité building, through these and other images, became an icon of the period of reconstruction, even though it was not necessarily representative of the wider picture. Hervé's unconventional architectural imagery played its part in this process. Furthermore, as will be discussed at greater length, images like Liénard's frontal view cannot be considered as 'purely informative'; they too are implicated in the ocularcentric approach Rasmussen sought to puncture.

By the start of the fifties, fewer than 200,000 new French homes were being completed each year. Two years after the publication of *Se loger*, as the housing crisis continued, La Documentation française issued *Les Problèmes du logement et la*

¹¹⁴ Olivier Beer, *Lucien Hervé: Building Images* (Los Angeles: Getty Research Institute, 2004), p. 21.

¹¹⁵ Beer, p. 21.

reconstruction (1951, fig. 3.2.19).¹¹⁶ In a defensive tone, the pamphlet explained what had already taken place in terms of addressing the housing problem and the factors that militated against its rapid resolution. Two images of the ruins in Saint-Lô and Caen (fig. 3.2.20), employed to recall the extent of the task the nation faced after liberation seven years previously, follow a photograph of the Unité façade (fig. 3.2.21). The introduction recounts this history alongside the ruin photographs, stating that 500,000 homes were destroyed, 1,500,000 damaged, and 5,000,000 people affected. The urgent work carried out in the early years (of clearing the ruins and munitions, and emergency construction work) is also recalled. Ruin imagery is here re-used with a new purpose in mind – to address growing discontent about the speed of progress. Thus, the task envisaged on the part of the MRU in 1951 was principally defensive explication, not the unification of an imagined community founded in the heritage and future of housing. The pamphlet discusses the lengthy process of town planning and the difficult task of the planners aiming to address nothing short of ‘a city’s entire future’.¹¹⁷ The reconstruction work at Aunay-sur-Odon (the town depicted in *Ici ... fut Aunay*, fig. 2.2.3) illustrates this discussion. An aerial photograph is used (fig. 3.2.22), along with ‘before’ and ‘after’ maps. A small village which can be captured in its entirety within the frame of the aerial photograph, Aunay is a metonymic example standing in for the national project of reconstruction that cannot be represented. In a manner connected to the nationalisation of loss performed through Roubier’s photography of architectural heritage in Caen, Aunay is made a cipher for the nation as a whole. But as a synecdoche for France, Aunay is a partial example, devoid of the problems of large-scale industrial urban centres. Such imagery is a mode of appropriation of a local reconstruction project in a nationalising discourse similar to that of the ruins discussed in the previous chapter. The caption lists the *département* and the chief architect, adding to the already distanced view of the town effected by the aerial photograph. Attribution of the town to a national *département* and to a specific architect allows it to stand for something bigger more readily: the scale of the task and the ambition this publication wishes to evoke with regard to the work of the MRU.¹¹⁸ The pamphlet and its imagery work to readjust the perspective of its audience. Prewar issues of slums

¹¹⁶ All but four of the photographs in this pamphlet are credited to the MRU (Ministère de la reconstruction et de l’urbanisme, *Les Problèmes du logement et la reconstruction*).

¹¹⁷ ‘Un plan d’aménagement engage en effet tout l’avenir d’une cité et ne peut être adopté qu’après une discussion largement ouverte et nécessairement très longue’ (Ministère de la reconstruction et de l’urbanisme, *Les Problèmes du logement et la reconstruction*, p. 10).

¹¹⁸ The misspelling of the name (‘Aulnay-sur-Odon’, instead of ‘Aunay’) seems particularly telling given this appropriation of the town as a symbol of the official reconstruction effort.

and inequality go largely unremarked. Instead, the war damage is invoked as an almost insurmountable challenge against which the MRU is slowly making headway. Images like those of Amiens and Dugny again demonstrate the visual and verbal emphasis on air, space and light (figs. 3.2.23 and 3.2.24). They also promote a distanced perspective, like that of the aerial photograph, since collectively they offer a view of the whole picture, stresses the scale of the task and the scope of the MRU ambition in contrast to any individual viewer's particular experience or situation.

This official document includes experimental, modernist and more traditional architecture. Yet, the traditional and the modernist do not contrast all that dramatically with one another. Janos Frecot has written about postwar architectural photography that it exhibited an 'interpermeation of photographic subject and photographic form'.¹¹⁹ This, at first opaque, phrase can help us grasp the relation between architectural style and architectural photography in the postwar period. The capacity of photography to isolate or extract striking forms from a three-dimensional scene, on the one hand, and the rectilinear and unembellished form of modernist architecture on the other, fed off each other. Even those buildings in a 'regional style' which included pitched roofs as a nod to traditional forms (such as Dugny), began to share the 'clean' and 'simple' lines of modernism. Influenced by austerity, but made meaningful through photography, there was a symbiotic relationship between architecture and its representation. Geoffrey Grigson, writing in the *Architectural Review* on light and architecture, traced the human interest in and investigation of light, from the opening words of Genesis to Newton's optics and the invention of photography. He demurred, 'I leave to others the close correlation, which must be possible, between this gathering emphasis on light and the sun-illuminated building of smooth planes.'¹²⁰ This is exactly the phenomenon traceable in the architectural photography and architectural style of French reconstruction – a symbiotic relationship between photography and architecture, and a parallel convergence of 'regional' and 'functional' styles.¹²¹ In the postwar challenge of national reconciliation and reinvention, allusions to the nation's past and its future jostled for primacy as unifying forces on which to found postwar imagined communities.

¹¹⁹ Janos Frecot, 'Building, City, Image: 1945 to 1985', in *Ein neuer Blick: Architekturfotografien aus den Staatlichen Museen zu Berlin*, ed. by Ludger Derenthal and Christine Kühn, trans. by Logan Kennedy and Leonhard Unglaub (Berlin: Wasmuth, 2010), pp. 393–5 (p. 394).

¹²⁰ Geoffrey Grigson, 'Wall into Window: The Physics and Metaphysics of Light', *Architectural Review* Number 618 (1948), 233–5 (p. 235).

¹²¹ The question of monumentality – the resurgence of debates about symbolism in modernist architecture which parallels this modernisation of traditional styles – will be examined in the following section.

The eclectic architecture of reconstruction overseen by the MRU sought variously to reconcile these two perspectives. Le Corbusier in *Le Point* sought to historicise and ground the modernist architecture of the Unité building; in Normandy, regional and traditional styles were subtly, but distinctively modernised. Through the formative influence of photographic representation and its privileging of air, light and space as the defining terms of architectural debate, Le Corbusier's distinct and tangible cubes and pyramids, along with Grigson's sun-illuminated smooth planes, became the shared visual resource of traditional and modernist architectural styles.

Another two years later, in 1953, using similar images and a similar strategy, a series of stories ran in the photo magazine *Point de Vue – Images du Monde*. Titled 'Le Drame du logement', they were attributed to Hervé.¹²² The first instalment began with a double page spread (fig. 3.2.25) which noted the destruction of the war in counter-posed bold text and ruin photographs. The article continues with a heavy emphasis on statistics stressing the scale of the reconstruction challenge. The nation is broken down into sections of the population who live in different forms of housing from ancient to modern, each illustrated by an image of architectural style from the period. These are juxtaposed with an image of a couple on a riverbank overlooking a tower block (fig. 3.2.26) with the title, 'The future', and a caption that emphasises the sun, air and *joie de vivre*. Again, images of past architectural styles and future possibilities are juxtaposed to negotiate visually the material problems of the housing crisis; air, space and light being the operative terms of the representational strategies employed. This is an effort to change the way people look at the housing crisis; to set out a vision of the future and at the same time to manage the public relations problem of the government's lack of progress. The key question, the second article suggested, is whether the accommodation of the future should be in houses or in flats.¹²³ This principal question is in turn largely reduced to visual terms, the accompanying photography being focused on the external views of reconstruction architecture and its repertoire of possible forms (fig. 3.2.27) As in the caption to the aerial view of New York in *Can Our Cities Survive?* (1942), this article talks in terms of the façade, reframing the housing problem as a question of the aesthetics of urban space rather than the

¹²² (Lucien Hervé, 'Le Drame du logement', *Point de vue – Images du monde*, 26 March 1952, pp. 12-15). Two further instalments appeared in April 1953. Despite the attribution of these articles to Hervé, given the similarity of imagery and vocabulary, it is likely they were part of the same MRU campaign pursued in the publications by La Documentation française. The photographs in the final instalment are credited to the MRU.

¹²³ Lucien Hervé, 'Maisons ou immeubles?', *Point de vue – Images du monde*, 9 April 1952, pp. 12-15.

design of living spaces. The third article, illustrated by aerial photographs of the new towns, including Fernand Pouillon's port of Marseille and Auguste Perret's twenty-five storey tower in Amiens (figs. 3.2.28), reinforced this privileging of the external and the visual.¹²⁴ It was concerned exclusively with the 'the new face of reconstruction', a distanced perspective aided and abetted by the aerial photograph.¹²⁵

In the French public sphere, the housing debate played out through images and counter-images across a range of publication formats. This formation of photographic discourse encompassed photographs of models and ruins, aerial photography and architectural photography, as well as Hervé's more impressionistic shots of the Unité building. It comprised a dialogue of images emanating from the public relations work of the MRU and the cottage industry of self-promotion orchestrated by Le Corbusier. It traversed official publications, architectural journals and the popular press. The play of forms in light, articulated in Le Corbusier's *Vers une architecture* (1923), was the principal concern of both architectural style and architectural photography in no trivial sense. These terms, traceable to the capacities of the camera and in the rhetoric of professionals and politicians, played a key role in defining the debate and the nature of the solutions proposed to the housing problems. In the moment of opportunity provided by postwar reconstruction, France moved resolutely closer towards a modernist architecture as a national 'house style'.

¹²⁴ Lucien Hervé, 'Le Drame du logement', *Point de vue – Images du monde*, 16 April 1952, pp. 24-25.

¹²⁵ This strategy of distancing or reframing perspectives on reconstruction was bolstered in these articles and the pamphlets from La Documentation française by the use of statistics. The first instalment of 'Le Drame du logement' spoke of the eloquence of statistics ('Les chiffres sont là, avec leur prodigieuse éloquence'). The final instalment included a balance sheet ('bilan') of destroyed houses set against reconstructed buildings. Such statistics effect an intellectual distancing or making abstract of the problems of the victims of wartime destruction (*les sinistrés*), analogous to the impact on ways of seeing and thinking by visual material, like aerial photographs or the focus on the façade promoted by architectural photography. Sert described statistics as the other chief 'new means of research' after aerial photography (Sert, p. 2).

3.3 *Re-educating the Eye: The Architectural Review and Churchill Gardens*

To re-educate the eye – that is the special need of the next decade.

*Architectural Review*¹²⁶

In January 1947, the editors of the *Architectural Review* published a remarkable statement on the objectives of the magazine.¹²⁷ Noting the magazine's function as a record of architectural practice, their declaration emphasised instead the publication's discursive role – the potential broader impact of what it termed 'scholar's table-talk conducted in public'. Their stated aim was a '*visual re-education*', claiming that the *Review* was unique in serving 'architecture as a visual art'. This privileging of visibility in architectural debate had an explicit political dimension: 'to those for whom visual relations matter, the capacity to see represents itself as a way of salvation, just as for those for whom social relations matter, forms of political arrangement represent themselves as a way of salvation'. The editors, in effect, were not choosing one over the other; visual relations were deemed integral to social relations. The grand ambition of this project was no less than 'to re-create a visual culture which will help to re-create civilisation'.¹²⁸ The statement was followed by a survey of the *Review's* contribution to architectural debate over the previous fifty years, illustrated with photography of the landmark buildings. This two-part editorial was literally and figuratively a *vision statement*. It was not a change of direction for the *Architectural Review*.¹²⁹ Nonetheless, the bold terms in which the editors stated the journal's aim of prompting a 'visual re-birth' and of promoting 'a new keenness of perception – which may enable

¹²⁶ 'The Second Half Century', *Architectural Review*, 601 (1947), 21-26 (p. 25).

¹²⁷ The article was credited to Hubert de Cronin Hastings, Osbert Lancaster, Nikolaus Pevsner and J. M. Richards. Richards also headed the British CIAM affiliated body, the MARS Group (Modern Architecture Research) which hosted CIAM VI in Bridgwater in September of the same year that this editorial statement was published.

¹²⁸ 'The Second Half Century', 22-26.

¹²⁹ In January 1944, the two lead articles had been 'the plea for the preservation of some bombed City churches in their present state of ruin, and a plea for a certain kind of visual approach to urban planning' – both pleas were predicated on 'the pleasures of open-eyedness and of susceptibility to the visual' (*Architectural Review*, 566 (1944), p. 33). The cover of the January 1944 edition was an illustration by Kenneth Rowntree of a modern housing tower block framed by the tracery of the window from a ruined church.

designers to give to the Modern Movement a new increase of life' are conspicuous.¹³⁰ Given the wide circulation of the *Architectural Review*, this ocularcentric editorial stance requires further analysis.¹³¹

Articles on public housing projects in the *Review* in 1949 provide examples of three ways of representing architecture common to the magazine and other examples of the transnational professional press of the time.¹³² The first is a tightly cropped, rigorously composed photograph (fig. 3.3.1) which produces a sense of abstract form either owing to a close-up on the pattern formed by the building's façade (what Eric de Maré termed 'wallscape'¹³³) or the creation of strong shapes by the isolation of the edge of buildings as they cut across an open space. The second frequently deployed means of representing modernist architecture is the focus on the detail (fig. 3.3.2).¹³⁴ Such images were often taken from a diagonal or oblique angle which emphasised formal aspects of the building or used shadow to create striking forms. The third means of representing an architectural project was to frame it using another object (fig. 3.3.3). Often, the object used to frame the building was something organic, like a tree. Discussing what he saw as the need to vitalize a modern structure with its 'stark mechanical lines, and its rigid repetition of elements', de Maré suggested photographers must 'use trees and foliage as our new form of baroque decoration – the free, organic shapes of trees (and their shadows) serving as perfect foils to the precise lines and forms of buildings'.¹³⁵ The foreground frames and background buildings, concertinaed in the two-dimensional photograph, often interfered with one another, frustrating an appreciation of the building's scale.

¹³⁰ 'The Second Half Century', p. 25.

¹³¹ In the same year that the *Review* published its vision statement, aware of the journal's wide circulation, translated highlights of its lead articles in French, German and Russian were printed. G. E. Kidder Smith described the *Review* as, 'the most highly regarded architectural journal in the world'. Of France, incidentally, he said there was 'almost no current architectural literature of value' (G. E. Kidder Smith, *The New Architecture of Europe* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1962), pp. 39 & 74).

¹³² 'Recent Flats in London Boroughs', *Architectural Review*, 629 (1949), 231-237; 'Flats in St Pancras', *Architectural Review*, 632 (1949), 81-85.

¹³³ Eric de Maré, *Photography and Architecture* (London: Architectural Press, 1961), p. 136.

¹³⁴ Andrew Higgott discusses the *Architectural Review's* policy in the 1930s ('details large, general views small') credited to Hastings (Higgott, p. 45).

¹³⁵ de Maré, p. 40.

These repeated strategies of representation – which had as their key structuring element or motif the pattern, the detail or the frame – stem from the practice of architectural photography as it developed over the course of the twentieth century and not from the *Review*'s particular editorial stance. They were relevant to the numerous professional journals of the period. Indeed, the same photographs recur consistently in the different journals of the three comparator countries.¹³⁶ Liénard's widely reproduced image of the Unité building (fig. 3.2.18), for instance, combines aspects of these three approaches. It presents a bold rectangular shape, in high contrast with the empty background of the sky and dominated by the pattern of the façade, which in turn is tempered by the trees in the foreground. Liénard's image also avoids distortion, such as diverging vertical lines of a tall building photographed at ground level or 'barrel-distortion' where the building appears to bulge owing to the use of a wide-angle lens. The result is an eye-catching photograph in which the scale of the building is unclear and attention is directed to the bold pattern formed by the balcony insets of the façade. These prominent representational strategies of architectural photography developed concurrently with the ocularcentric stance of the *Review*. The visual crusade made explicit in the editorial of 1947 was predicated on this mode of image-making. Never simply informative, these photographs are aesthetic objects in their own right. Moreover, they promote an attitude towards urban space which elides the looking at architecture with looking at architectural photography. In other words, they advance a purely aesthetic approach founded in the faculty of vision and the quality of visibility – an approach which the *Review*'s editors endorsed and pursued.

Related to the editors' vision statement were a number of campaigns conceived, executed and illustrated by the *Review*'s editors and regular contributors. These included a long-running series on 'Townscape', which employed a different (but equally aestheticising) mode of photographic image-making to bolster its case. A key articulation of this 'way of looking at the world' by Hubert de Cronin Hastings (which referenced the eighteenth century English tradition of the picturesque) appeared in

¹³⁶ Of course, it was cheaper to send for photographs from the site than to send photographers to it. In tandem with a greater use of photographs and the refinement of architectural photography's mode of image-making, there was a concerted effort by architects to control the public image of their work, commissioning photographers directly. Frank Lloyd Wright has been quoted as saying, 'The real art of the twentieth century is the art of public relations' (Miles Glendinning, *Architecture's Evil Empire?: The Triumph and Tragedy of Global Modernism* (London: Reaktion, 2010), p. 19). The history of the role of public relations work in the field of architecture remains to be written.

December 1949.¹³⁷ Townscape was characterised as an ‘English visual philosophy [that] could revolutionize our national contribution to architecture and town-planning by making possible our own regional development of the International Style’. In short, contrasted with rationalist or classicist approaches to town planning (held here to be quintessentially French) or romantic or organic approaches (held to be characteristically German), the notion of townscape trumpeted individuation and irregularity in the urban landscape rather than strong rectilinear or sinuous forms. It held that piecemeal and specific approaches to problems of planning were superior to the totalising visions or grand plans often associated with modernist town planning.¹³⁸

At the same time as drawing on the English articulation of the picturesque, this so-called ‘radical visual philosophy’¹³⁹ also drew on another strand of modernism from the continent: the photographs and framing text mobilised in townscape campaigning exhibit a distinct surrealist influence. A photograph of a gutter and the stone setts surrounding a cast iron drain was the lead illustration for Hastings’ article of December 1949 (fig. 3.3.4). The single image – which might otherwise seem banal – dominates the page. It is reminiscent of a photograph by André Kertész from 1929 (fig. 3.3.5).¹⁴⁰ Both carve an arresting image from the flux of urban street life. In doing so, the object or moment depicted is transformed from something specific to something allusive and ambiguous. In the *Review*, this quality is enhanced by the caption: ‘The granite sets

¹³⁷ The article was published under a pseudonym (Ivor de Wolfe, ‘Townscape: A Plea for an English Visual Philosophy’, *Architectural Review*, 636 (1949), 354–362 (p. 355)). This was not the first articulation of the theme in the *Review*. John Macarthur and Matthew Aitchison have analysed the different inflections of ‘townscape’ and ‘the picturesque’, arguing that Sharp’s *Oxford Replanned* may be the origin of the former term (Matthew Aitchison and John Macarthur, ‘Pevsner’s Townscape’, in *Visual Planning and the Picturesque: Nikolaus Pevsner*, ed. by Matthew Aitchison (Los Angeles: Getty Research Institute, 2010), pp. 1–43). The photographs and arguments of the townscape campaign were published in two different volumes: Gordon Cullen, *Townscape* (London: Architectural Press, 1961); Gordon Cullen, *The Concise Townscape* (London: Architectural Press, 1971).

¹³⁸ (De Wolfe, p. 355). For examples of the sorts of approaches the townscape campaign took aim at, see Auguste Perret’s grid layout for Le Havre and Hans Bernhard Reichow, *Organische Stadtbaukunst: von der Grossstadt zur Stadtlandschaft* (Braunschweig: Georg Westermann, 1948).

¹³⁹ De Wolfe, p. 362.

¹⁴⁰ As Ian Walker has noted, the work of many interwar and postwar photographers overlaps with surrealism. Of Kertész, Walker wrote, ‘one must place the work next to surrealism rather than within it’ (Ian Walker, *City Gorged with Dreams: Surrealism and Documentary Photography in Interwar Paris* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2002), p. 152). While not a card-carrying Surrealist, the work of photographers like Kertész explored the relationship between photography and the surreal. It is this relationship that is examined here with regard to the townscape campaign, and in the following chapter in relation to urban photography in photo-magazines.

break in waves against the cliff of the curb, the bicyclist throws a cloak of shadow as of a cloud upon the sea, the drain-cover awaits the shower that will suck heedless match-ends through fifteen avid little mouths into the sinister underground organization that underlies the city.’¹⁴¹ Through this photographic sample and poetic caption, townscape is offered as something lyrical or wondrous in character. Indeed, the relation to surrealist photography – which likewise sought the poetic in the everyday or to transform the everyday through photography – is explicitly made in the text of the article. Hastings listed the diverse objects which constitute the urban scene (such as, ‘one bus stop, two public lavatories, [...] one manhole cover, one bend in the road to port, [...] one Bass triangle, two bollards, six plane trees’), asserting that, ‘from such assortments the radical planner has to produce his practical surrealist picture’.¹⁴² Hastings suggested that town planning in mid-twentieth century Britain could draw on the antecedents of the picturesque. But this was not simply the promotion of an historical and peculiarly English way of seeing, as he claimed. It was also connected to a photographic way of seeing with continental antecedents anchored in urban modernity.¹⁴³

A photo-essay credited to Gordon Cullen followed Hasting’s 1949 townscape manifesto.¹⁴⁴ Elements of the urban scene which should be considered in the task of future planning were pictured, ‘grouped under headings designed to suggest the type of vision – the particular exercise of the eye – needed to apprehend them’.¹⁴⁵ The list included the eye as movie-camera, exterior decorator, matchmaker, sculptor, painter, traffic cop, and poet (figs. 3.3.6 and 3.3.7). Tellingly, the ‘eye as photographer’ was

¹⁴¹ De Wolfe, p. 354.

¹⁴² De Wolfe, p. 361.

¹⁴³ A related campaign was titled, ‘The Functional Tradition’. It too articulated an ocularcentric approach to architecture, described as ‘a self-imposed preoccupation with the visual aspects of architecture, as distinguished from the technical, professional or sociological aspects’. It too displayed an affinity with surrealist approaches to urban space. It was illustrated with a selection of images offering urban fragments providing examples of ‘anonymous functional design’. The foreword to a special edition on the Functional Tradition hinted likewise at a surrealist way of seeing when de Maré asserted that ‘before townscape can be treated as a serious issue, the anonymous, the unacknowledged, the visually unidentified, elements and objects of the urban scene must be collected, analysed, brought into consciousness so to speak’. Architectural discourse, he suggested, required ‘a larger vocabulary of the ready-made elements’ (Eric de Maré, ‘The Functional Tradition’, *Architectural Review*, 637 (1950), 2-66 (pp. 3 & 4)). A selection of images and comments from this campaign was also published as a book: J. M. Richards, *The Functional Tradition in Early Industrial Buildings* (London: Architectural Press, 1958).

¹⁴⁴ Gordon Cullen, ‘Townscape Casebook’, *Architectural Review*, 636 (1949), 363-374.

¹⁴⁵ Cullen, p. 363.

absent from the list, for the good reason that the camera and photography underpin *all* these ways of seeing. This photographic practice which recalled interwar continental surrealism was not simply a means by which the townscape campaign was communicated; it constituted a particular way of seeing the urban scene on which the idea of townscape was predicated. Ian Walker has described ‘the relation *between* Englishness, Surrealism and photography’ as a ‘process of hybridisation’.¹⁴⁶ The mode of photography employed in townscape campaigning exhibits exactly this sort of cross-national cultural exchange. Thus, the dominant strategies of architectural photography (the pattern, the detail and the frame) and the surrealist-inflected snapshot photography of the urban environment (the combination of photographic sampling and poetic captioning) share an important characteristic. Though they are different modes of urban image-making, they both promote the aesthetic appreciation of architecture and urban space as visual artefacts.

The mobilization of photography in townscape campaigns and the picturesque approach to town planning that it underpinned contrasted sharply with the approach of the MRU. Codified in Dautry’s Charte de l’urbanisme, the state-sanctioned approach in France held modernist planning approaches to be the appropriate framework in which regional building styles could be pursued. The *Review* argued for modernist architecture, but town planning of a more traditional, esoteric bent. These two approaches are related to two different ways of seeing urban space and two contrasting modes of image-making: the aerial photograph and surrealist-influenced street photography. This ability of the camera to transform the lived space of the city into a visual object is central to the notion of architecture as a visual object apprehended by the eye and the task of planning as a visual exercise. Different modes of picturing – whether it is the aerial view which Vidler terms the ‘Corbusian gaze’¹⁴⁷ or photography reminiscent of interwar surrealism – have a bearing on different approaches to the tasks of planning and reconstruction and to the negotiation of modernism and tradition, felt to be so pressing an issue in all three comparator countries. The contrast between a Corbusian perspective and the townscape view is perfectly illustrated by a photograph reproduced in Le Corbusier’s *La Ville Radieuse* (1933, fig. 3.3.8). It is an image by Eugène Atget, famously embraced as an icon by surrealists for his pictures of Paris. While artists like Man Ray and Berenice Abbott

¹⁴⁶ Ian Walker, *So Exotic, So Homemade: Surrealism, Englishness and Documentary Photography* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2007), p. 7.

¹⁴⁷ Vidler, pp. 35–45 (p. 44).

celebrated Atget's street scenes, Le Corbusier used a photograph from 1912 (Courtyard 41, Rue Broca in Paris' fifth arrondissement) as an illustration of slums. He did not see the poetry or lyricism of the everyday, giving the photograph an altogether different inflection with the caption, 'History. Historic Paris, tubercular Paris'.¹⁴⁸ The eclectic approach of the MRU was facilitated by the aerial photograph (which reduced inconsequential differences to sameness, while the appropriate spatial layout remained clear). The *Review*-advocated approach found the same visual pleasures in images of historic Oxford as of new flats in Harlow. The question thus arises, what accounts for the apparent paradox of the *Review*'s promotion of modernist architecture and eulogising of historic elements of the urban scene?

Richards wrote of 'looking at the past in the same perspective as the present'.¹⁴⁹ An image published in the *Architectural Review* in September 1949 of new public housing in Hackney by architect Frederick Gibberd demonstrates the visual pleasure which the photography of both historic and modern architecture was felt to offer and which accounts for this dual perspective (fig. 3.3.9). It bears a remarkable resemblance to Piero della Francesca's *The Flagellation of Christ* (1460, fig. 3.3.10). The comparison in a sense is ludicrous, given the temporal and thematic differences. Nonetheless, there are undeniable resemblances: the three boys stand in a similar formation to the three men surrounding Christ; the lamppost in the photograph, along with the brick wall on the far left and the low wall on the right, divide the space in much the same way as the two pillars and the pattern of the floor tiling pillar do in the painting; the tree on the left and the doorway/balcony recur in both images in comparable positions. The validity of the comparison is founded not on an assumption of authorial intention, but in the transformation of the built environment into an aesthetic experience which both images perform. Abigail Solomon-Godeau has compared the visual structuring of photography and Renaissance painting:

While natural vision and perception have no vanishing point, are binocular, unbounded, in constant motion, and marked by loss of clarity in the periphery, the camera image, like Renaissance painting, offers a static, uniform field in which orthogonals converge at a single vanishing point. Such a system of pictorial organisation, by now so imbued in

¹⁴⁸ Le Corbusier, *The Radiant City: Elements of a Doctrine of Urbanism to Be Used as the Basis of Our Machine-Age Civilization* (London: Faber and Faber, 1967), p. 100.

¹⁴⁹ *Architectural Review*, November (1979), p. 302; cited by Higgott, p. 51.

Western consciousness as to appear altogether natural, has certain ramifications. Chief among these is the position of visual mastery conferred upon the spectator whose ideal, all-seeing eye becomes the commanding locus of the pictorial field.¹⁵⁰

However, the parallel between the two images exceeds this 'spectatorial position of perspectival and pictorial mastery'.¹⁵¹ In sharing the manner in which they transform space into a two-dimensional aesthetic experience, both images partake of the same visual culture. In the very instantiating of this visual culture, the three-dimensional importance of architecture is undermined. As Gaddo Morpurgo has termed it, the camera has the capacity to forge 'an image of architecture which sets up a dialogue with a landscape of ever more extensive images, which overcomes architecture itself in order to relate to other fragments, to other visions, which belong to our memory, to our visual culture'.¹⁵² The *Review's* commitment to the appreciation of architecture as a visual medium *tout court* thus has the effect of *overcoming architecture* – collapsing urban space into mere image. The photograph attains a life in some sense more vital than the building. It circulates more widely and is appreciated by more people – invited to share the pleasures of architectural photography – through the architectural journals and books of the period. In the *Architectural Review*, this visual pleasure equally accommodated photographs of historic Oxford, the Cobb at Lyme Regis and the latest new town tower block.

Just as the promotion of picturesque traditions and an appreciation of the Modern Movement were not deemed mutually exclusive, the dynamically illustrated pages of the postwar *Review* also hosted a set of cross-national debates which reprised the theme of symbolism deemed *verboden* in the interwar period when the heady propagandising of functionalism was *de rigueur*. The subject of monumentality – the capacity of the building to take on the characteristics of the monument, to stand for something or to symbolise – was the focus of much discussion. CIAM had placed the topic high on its agenda following the restatement of its aims in 1947 which linked

¹⁵⁰ Abigail Solomon-Godeau, *Photography at the Dock: Essays on Photographic History, Institutions, and Practices* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1991), p. 181.

¹⁵¹ Solomon-Godeau, p. 181.

¹⁵² Gaddo Morpurgo, 'Architecture and the Photographic Transcription of Space', *Rassegna*, trans. by Frank Spadaro, 6 (1984), 124–6 (p. 125).

‘man’s emotional and material needs’.¹⁵³ In 1937, Lewis Mumford confidently proclaimed that ‘the very notion of a modern monument is a contradiction in terms: if it is a monument, it cannot be modern, and if it is modern, it cannot be a monument’.¹⁵⁴ In 1944, Giedion actively argued the need for a new monumentality, claiming that ‘people desire buildings that represent their social, ceremonial, and community life’.¹⁵⁵ It is in terms of monumentality that Henry-Russell Hitchcock discussed Churchill Gardens, Pimlico in 1953. Churchill Gardens – like the Unité d’habitation of Marseilles – was commissioned early in the postwar period following an international competition in 1945 that attracted sixty-four entries. The young British architects Philip Powell and Hidalgo Moya (just 25 and 26 at the time) were announced winners in 1946. Work began in 1948 and lasted fifteen years, ultimately providing 1,661 dwellings for around 6,000 people. It was a thirty acre site identified for redevelopment in the 1930s by Westminster Council, bomb damaged in wartime, and included in the County of London Plan of 1943. The first phase was completed in the summer of 1950, consisting of 370 flats in four nine-storey blocks. The row of commercial units at the base of the Lupus Street building included one of Britain’s first self-service shops, which opened in 1952.¹⁵⁶

In an article published in September 1953, Hitchcock observed that the unfinished site was visible from trains approaching Victoria and Waterloo stations, describing the housing blocks of Churchill Gardens as having ‘the advantage of being buildings everyone sees’.¹⁵⁷ The principal concern for any critical approach, Hitchcock contended, must be a visual one:

Already they provide a landmark vying with any the twentieth century has yet provided in London. That the Pimlico housing blocks are necessarily a landmark poses one of the major problems the architects faced: Can low-cost public housing achieve, within a rigid frame of

¹⁵³ Congrès Internationaux d’Architecture Moderne, pp. 101–2 (p. 102).

¹⁵⁴ Cited by Eric Mumford, *The CIAM Discourse on Urbanism, 1928-1960* (Cambridge, MA.: MIT Press, 2000), p. 150.

¹⁵⁵ Sigfried Giedion, ‘The Need for a New Monumentality’, in *Architecture, You and Me: The Diary of a Development* (Cambridge, MA.: Harvard University Press, 1958), pp. 25–39 (pp. 27–28).

¹⁵⁶ Kenneth Powell, *Powell & Moya* (London: RIBA, 2009), pp. 1, 13 & 15.

¹⁵⁷ Henry-Russell Hitchcock, ‘Pimlico: An Assessment of Westminster City Council’s Churchill Gardens’, *Architectural Review*, 681 (1953), 176-184 (p. 178).

sociological purpose and economic stringency, the qualities of an architectural monument? [...] It is thus very relevant, as it would not necessarily be with all post-war housing, to discuss the Pimlico blocks in terms of monumentality.¹⁵⁸

This apparent sensitivity to what the new architecture of mass housing symbolised was pertinent, given the powerful concepts of 'reconstruction' and 'planning' in the postwar period (with their implications of new political or social orders) and modernist architecture's positioning as *the* solution to urban problems. However, the main thrust of Hitchcock's commentary related to the visual impact of the building, not what Churchill Gardens represented in terms of the wider ambitions for postwar reconstruction.

Hitchcock's article is worth quoting at length to convey the tone of the reductive discussion which is redolent of the language a traditional art historian might use to describe a painting:

The vertical elements of the stair towers are recessed and the major horizontals of the structure cross them in the frontal plane. Thus the long ranges of thirteen maisonettes are phrased by the stair towers but the unity of the whole composition is not compromised. Seen in the perspective of the street, the scale is still related to the Victorian houses that flank and face it; yet because of the relatively great size of the block, its solid ends and the unifying effect of the visible concrete skeleton there is a monumental quality of scale as well. This is a proper expression of public authority as opposed to the private agencies that built up Victorian Pimlico. Even the inhabitants may feel that they are allowed, by the symbol of having an outside front door of their own and an interior stair, to inhabit the equivalent of an individual house and yet also to share in the larger entity of the block whose over-all scale is appropriate to them as a social group.¹⁵⁹

The operative terms – words like unity, composition, perspective, scale and expression – emphasise aesthetic concerns. The building technology which facilitates the

¹⁵⁸ Hitchcock, p. 178.

¹⁵⁹ Hitchcock, p. 183.

construction ('the visible concrete skeleton') is reduced to its visual character (its 'unifying effect' and 'monumental quality of scale'). The scant (and patronizing) reference to the development's inhabitants is also framed in terms of a dubious symbolism, rather than describing the buildings as living and lived-in spaces. For Hitchcock, monumentality is a question of scale, solidity, unity and visual impact in urban space; the symbolism of modernist architecture is self-referential or solipsistic. The modernist architecture of public housing is here emptied of the socially or politically progressive concerns that were paramount in public debate of wartime and the first postwar years.

The photographs (chiefly by Peter Pitt, figs. 3.3.11 to 3.3.14) which ran with Hitchcock's ocularcentric commentary reinforce this way of looking at and thinking about the architecture of urban mass housing as a visual and an aesthetic concern. The main photograph opposite the first page of Hitchcock's commentary depicts the block on Lupus Street at night. A halo-effect is produced around the artificial lights and the undulating line of the concrete arches over the shop fronts runs parallel to the bottom of the page. These representational strategies encourage the viewer to focus on the patterning of the façade. The next three images, grouped together on one page, are dominated by oblique lines. In another image, there is a sense of the block having been superimposed on the townscape in a manner reminiscent of Roth's illustration of proposals for Roubaix which featured in Bill's *Wiederaufbau* (1945) (fig. 3.1.10). The final trio of images include one focused on the geometric pattern offered by a detail of fenestration. In others, the presence of trees, clouds and children provide softer elements, but the horizontal and diagonal lines of the spaces captured by a wide-angle lens are still the most striking element. In both the text and images, the visuality of the building and its aesthetic qualities are repeatedly emphasised, at the expense of the social relations the buildings might have facilitated or the experience one might have from inhabiting (or simply visiting) these spaces. This is reflected in Richards' comment in the *Review* in January 1954 describing Churchill Gardens 'not as a feature of the landscape but as the landscape itself'¹⁶⁰ – a terminology that reduces the buildings to the object of visual appreciation comparable to a painting or a mountain-top view.

This conception of monumentality was prefigured in a round-table discussion of the Unité building by London County Council architects printed in the *Review*.¹⁶¹ The

¹⁶⁰ J. M. Richards, 'Preview', *Architectural Review*, 685 (1954), 7-18 (p. 9).

¹⁶¹ 'Le Corbusier's Unité d'habitation', *Architectural Review*, 653 (1951), 292-300.

article, which commented on Le Corbusier's '25 years of paper planning', was illustrated with photographs that could have been taken to illustrate Le Corbusier's comment regarding architecture as the masterly play of masses in light (figs. 3.3.15 and 3.3.16). Hitchcock emphasised the role of photography and the architectural press when he noted in his commentary on Churchill Gardens, 'Certainly Powell and Moya know and admire his Unite d'Habitation, whose general character has been familiar for some five or six years now even though it has only just been finished'.¹⁶² In 1953, an English language version of *Le Point* special edition on the Unité building was published as *The Marseille Block*.¹⁶³

The description by de Maré of trees as decoration hints at a crucial aspect of postwar ocularcentric architectural discourse. Architecture was conceived, not in terms of the building *as inhabited space*, but rather *as image*. Such decoration was in no way permanent or repeatable for users of the building. It was only for viewers of the photograph. The propagandising of the interwar and wartime periods came to be replaced by a sort of ideal existence of the building in the photograph. The permanent photographic record – invariably made, as Antoine Baudin has noted, before the building was inhabited¹⁶⁴ – became in a sense the finished product of architecture. Within the ocularcentric mindset, the life of the building was in the circulating image, not in the world. Not only was architectural photography instrumental in the process of making some buildings iconic; it also elevated more run-of-the-mill housing projects to objects of aesthetic appreciation, defamiliarising everyday urban space and presenting it as a visual work of art. In this aestheticised architectural debate in the public sphere, the public housing block was one of the central objects of interest, always defined in visual terms.

¹⁶² Hitchcock, p. 183.

¹⁶³ Le Corbusier, *The Marseilles Block* (London: Harvill Press, 1953).

¹⁶⁴ 'For architects, the importance of photography grew at the same rate as the accelerated international spread of their work. The intervention of the photographer could have irremediable consequences, since it often established the definitive image of the subject photographed: most of the major achievements of the Modern Movement were publicized, and are known even today, through a specific sequence, made at a specific moment in time – in principle, between the end of construction and the arrival of the user, who could only interfere with the image of the architecture' (Antoine Baudin, 'From Collection to Encyclopaedia: Issues and Milestones of an Exemplary Undertaking', in *Photography, Modern Architecture and Design: The Alberto Sartoris Collection*, ed. by Antoine Baudin (Lausanne: EDFL Press, 2005), pp. 14–45 (p. 16)).

There was criticism of postwar housing architecture articulated in the *Review*. Lionel Brett, for instance, commented on the housing developments 'sufficient to change the whole character of the city':

Domesticity, yes, we understand that; and we have traditional ways of expressing it. Monumentality, too, we respect at a distance. But can domesticity be expressed in ten stories, or should the Little Man have to live in a monument? [...] Looking back over this great mass of building, one cannot but feel that nearly all those responsible for it, some with grace, some with clumsiness, some with dignity, are marching in the wrong direction.¹⁶⁵

Yet, it is ironic that it was not principally the developments of the immediate postwar years that would prove unpopular or problematic. By 2000 half of the flats on the Churchill Gardens estate had been sold, 'mostly to former tenants'.¹⁶⁶ The radical change to the urban landscape and the nature of mass living would come in the later 1950s and 1960s, when the image of the tower block was still popular, but the ocularcentrism inherent in the first postwar decade had completely overtaken any notion of social purpose. Thus, in 1961, Kidder Smith praised the developments at Roehampton, stating 'the London County Council's architectural staff has produced some of the finest housing ... in all Europe'. At the same time, he expressed concern about a shift from state-sponsored projects to private sector solutions to the housing questions: 'British speculative housing, now that financial controls are off, is universally ghastly: among Europe's worst'.¹⁶⁷

It is such later developments that are properly open to Pallasmaa's critique that, 'modernist design at large has housed the intellect and the eye, but it has left the body and the other senses, as well as our memories, imagination and dreams, homeless'.¹⁶⁸ The *Review* – influenced heavily by the representational strategies of urban and architectural photography – played a significant part in a lamentable state of affairs. In May 1954, in an article on high-rise developments, Richards focused on the 'visual

¹⁶⁵ Lionel Brett, 'Towards an Architecture: Post-war flats in Britain', *Architectural Review*, 635 (1949), 315-322 (pp. 315 & 322).

¹⁶⁶ Powell, p. 16.

¹⁶⁷ Kidder Smith, pp. 35 & 37.

¹⁶⁸ Pallasmaa, p. 19.

problem' of the skyline, berating the meagre slabs which end without a flourish and celebrating Le Corbusier's 'exciting silhouette' in Marseille.¹⁶⁹ Thus, the *Review* had segued in fewer than ten years from envisioning the opportunity resulting from the Blitz to a poverty of visual thinking – a situation Richards acknowledged in the 1970s when he spoke of modernist architecture's 'hollow victory'¹⁷⁰ and reflected on the upshot of planning's predominance which produced buildings 'designed from the outside.'¹⁷¹

¹⁶⁹ J. M. Richards, 'The High Flat Block', *Architectural Review*, 689 (1954), 341-342 (p. 342).

¹⁷⁰ J. M. Richards, 'The Hollow Victory, 1932 to 1972', *RIBA Journal*, May (1972), 192-197.

¹⁷¹ Cited by Lubbock, pp. 1–15 (p. 10).

3.4 Germany, International Attention and Hamburg's Grindelhochhäuser

Speaking to the German Workers' League in Berlin in 1965, Theodor Adorno referred to his book *Minima Moralia: Reflections from Damaged Life* (1951). He recounted how he had argued there that 'the world is no longer habitable'.¹⁷² Adorno's speech highlighted the self-contradictory nature of the ideology of functionalism ('the absolute rejection of style becomes [itself a] style') and expressed a serious concern about the style of German reconstruction ('[it] fills me with a disturbing discontent').¹⁷³ More importantly for this discussion of architectural photography and architectural style, it contributed the notion of habitability. The unconditional defeat and occupation of Germany, as well as the coming to light of the crimes against humanity of the National Socialist regime, entailed a massive task of rethinking and reconstructing the political and social order of Germany. Its political institutions were toppled, its culture was questioned, and its self-image shattered – all this in addition to the destruction of homes and businesses. In short, many of the structures and practices in which German national identity inhered were challenged. Adorno's mention of 'habitability' alludes to this situation: the abstract figure of 'the German' had no home of any sort (political, cultural, or domestic). This notion of habitability both highlights a marked difference from France and Britain in the use of architectural photography in the later 1940s in West Germany, and allows the tracing of a later convergence in the 1950s between the position and consumption of architectural photography in the three comparator nations.¹⁷⁴

¹⁷² Theodor Adorno, 'Functionalism Today', in *Rethinking Architecture: A Reader in Cultural Theory*, ed. by Neil Leach (Abingdon: Routledge, 1997), pp. 6–18 (p. 12). It was the following section to which he referred: 'Dwelling, in the proper sense, is now impossible. The traditional residences we grew up in have grown intolerable: each trace of comfort in them is paid for with a betrayal of knowledge, each vestige of shelter with the musty pact of family interests. The functional modern habitations designed from a *tabula rasa*, are living-cases manufactured by experts for philistines, or factory sites that have strayed into the consumption sphere, devoid of all relation to the occupant' (Theodor Adorno, *Minima Moralia: Reflections from Damaged Life* (London: Verso, 2005), p. 38).

¹⁷³ Adorno, pp. 6–18 (pp. 10 & 6).

¹⁷⁴ It will be argued here that the notion of habitability illuminates the function of architectural photography in relation to the postwar housing situation in Germany. However, it should be noted that Adorno was making a far broader point about the habitability of the world. Gerhard Schweppenhäuser has summarised this critique: 'Adorno argued that all attempts from *within* bourgeois capitalist society to reform the shape and appearance of daily life were condemned to failure. An aesthetically authentic life was possible only within a liberated society. Because social revolution had been neglected in the West, one could really "no longer live." The destruction of European cities by bombing attack and the National Socialist labor [sic.] and concentration camps both confirm a single tendency, one being implemented universally,

The image of the home was, thus, especially charged in Germany. Architecture was under pressure (that is, architects, planners, the occupying forces and German politicians were under pressure), not simply to create spaces for living, but to contribute to the process of reimagining public life. Fischer describes the problem faced as that of 'reconstructing the very foundations of life and culture'.¹⁷⁵ Public housing in Germany, in a manner far surpassing that in France and the UK, concerned not simply housing the public, but redefining who that public was and reinventing a public sphere. Notwithstanding the different order of the 'housing crisis' in Germany (materially, politically and culturally), German architects, planners and politicians – like those in France and Britain – had recourse to existing debates and ideas to address the problem. As Schivelbusch notes, the future is always built on the rubble of the past.¹⁷⁶ Unsurprisingly, the question of architectural style was fraught in this postwar moment. Some sought to recover modernist traditions of architecture and planning. Some sought to cleanse traditional or *Heimatstil* practices of their Nazi associations.¹⁷⁷ But even within this dynamic of modernism and traditionalism, the significance of the various styles was not always clear-cut in the first postwar years. Some German audiences attending lectures by Walter Gropius in 1947 judged his concept of the ideal neighbourhood unit of 5000 to 8000 residents to resemble Nazi developments centred round local party headquarters. Others read in the resurgence of Bauhaus-influenced architecture and design a marked revolutionary or communist influence which, as tensions with the Soviet Union developed, grew less palatable.¹⁷⁸ With renowned

namely, the tendency toward scientific-technical maximization of efficiency in the capitalist production of goods. Although Adorno did not say so explicitly, he clearly viewed modernist ideals such as Le Corbusier's concept of the house as a "machine for living" as manifestations of a technocratic-instrumental rationality. [...] Functionalism doesn't function, he argued in his famous speech "Functionalism Today," which he delivered to the German Workers' League in Berlin in 1965' (Gerhard Schweppenhäuser, *Theodor W. Adorno: An Introduction*, trans. by James Rolleston (Durham, NC.: Duke University Press, 2009), pp. 68–9).

¹⁷⁵ Fischer, pp. 131–44 (p. 141).

¹⁷⁶ Schivelbusch, p. 183.

¹⁷⁷ As Durth comments, 'Conservative architects in many places opposed the proponents of New Building or *Neues Bauen*. The latter, in conscious opposition to the historicizing and regional forms of "Third Reich architecture," sought connections to developments cut off by Nazi cultural policies after 1933' (Durth, I, 480–487 (p. 481)). Diefendorf considers these 'style wars' in detail (Diefendorf, *In the Wake of War*, pp. 43–66).

¹⁷⁸ Durth notes the fascist interpretation of Gropius's lectures (Durth, I, 480–487 (p. 481)). Hartmut Frank has suggested the opposing interpretation of the Bauhaus legacy (Frank, 58–67). The case of Gropius raises a complex issue regarding cross-national cultural exchange in the field of architectural debate. Gropius left Nazi Germany for Britain, settling permanently in the United States. He visited and reported on the question of reconstruction for the American Control Authority. In July and August 1947, he gave lectures in Berlin, Frankfurt and Munich. Gropius presented his findings in a report published in the journal *TASK*, in 1948. In 1949, he

exiles like Gropius who did not return, the few who did, the architects and planners who returned from 'internal exile' after the war, and the many who retained positions they held under the Nazi regime in the postwar period, the architectural history of West German reconstruction is complex. With continuities from wartime proposals, progress under different occupying administrations, the regional differences between states (*Länder*) and fruition in a divided Germany marked by Cold War tensions, the architectural and planning solutions to the challenge of reconstruction exhibited by West German towns and cities vary considerably. Some were committed to modernisation (Berlin, Frankfurt, Hamburg), others reconstructed the historic elements (Nuremberg), and others still tried to negotiate these two approaches (Cologne and Munich).

Yet, what is important to this study is the international interest and involvement in occupied Germany (and subsequently the two German states) in the first postwar decade and how, over a relatively short period (notwithstanding the unique situation of Germany in 1945), a convergence emerged in ways of viewing and thinking about urban development between West Germany, France and Britain. This occurred during a period of intense international scrutiny on Germany, its response to the challenge of reconstruction and latterly its status as a front line in the Cold War. The markedly international character of the West German public sphere with respect to reconstruction is illustrated by the cover of *Deutschland im Wiederaufbau* (1951, fig. 3.4.1), an official annual report from the Federal Government, published from 1949 by the Informationsamt der Bundesregierung, featuring statements and statistics from the various ministries. The cover of the 1951 edition is a visualisation of the discursive context in which the task of reconstruction was taking place.¹⁷⁹ In West Germany, reconstruction entailed the refashioning of a national identity or imagined community, performed on a global stage. The cover is a collage of photographs of industry and modernist architecture brought together with headlines from newspapers from Germany and around the world, including *Le Figaro* and *The Times*. As demonstrated

spoke on the subject at the CIAM meeting. Diefendorf asks whether we should see the return of modernist architecture and planning as a US influence on West Germany or the re-importation of German ideas (Diefendorf, 1, 587–93). It is a pertinent question that gets to the heart of the complex traffic in ideas and images, but the principal concern here is not national claims to originality. Rather, it is the role and implications of photography as an intentional visual object which promoted particular ideas and images within and across borders.

¹⁷⁹ Presse- und Informationsamt der Bundesregierung, *Deutschland im Wiederaufbau: Tätigkeitsbericht der Bundesregierung für das Jahr 1951* (Bonn: Deutscher Bundesverlag, 1951).

here, architecture in postwar Germany was flung open to international scrutiny. The four-power occupation of Germany meant a *de facto* internationalisation of the question of reconstruction.

To examine the role played by photography in debates about redesigning and constructing habitable spaces, analysis will concentrate on a number of photographic representations of one of the first public housing projects in West Germany – a building which appeared on the 1951 cover of *Deutschland im Wiederaufbau*. The 15-storey Hamburg development known as the Grindelhochhäuser was designed by a consortium of architects. It was originally planned as housing for members of the British occupation administration. Work started in 1946, but when it became clear that administrative functions would be relocated following the amalgamation of the Western zones, it became a public housing project – one of the largest in West Germany until the early 1950s.¹⁸⁰ Images of this building as it journeys across the pages of architectural guides, official publications, the photographic press and professional journals highlight the role of architectural photography in the postwar West German public sphere and beyond.

Neues Bauen in Deutschland (1952) is a short collection of photographs showing the reconstruction projects of West Germany.¹⁸¹ The cover carries (fig. 3.4.2) an image of part of the Grindelhochhäuser façade, the regular form of the building's elevation creating a grid pattern over which the book's title is superimposed in *sans serif* text. Together image and text suggest the functional minimalism of the architecture pictured within. Amongst the first photographs in the book is a tripartite comparison of scale models of the town of Hannover (fig. 3.4.3), illustrating an article by Hubert Hoffmann on town planning. While the models are labelled as being of Hannover, they stand in for the generic German city. The three images show replicas of a city prior to bombing, once destroyed and following reconstruction. Helmut Puff, regarding such models of ruined German urban centres commissioned by town halls and other institutions in the period, has asserted that they contributed to the task of psychological reconstruction required in the war's aftermath: 'Through the lens of

¹⁸⁰ (Diefendorf, *In the Wake of War*, p. 147). The architects were: Bernhard Hermkes, Rudolf Jäger, Rudolf Lodders, Heinz Jürgen Ruscheweyh, Ferdinand Streb, Fritz Trautwein, Albrecht Sander, and Hermann Zess. For further discussion of the project, see Axel Schildt, *Die Grindelhochhäuser: Eine Sozialgeschichte der ersten deutschen Wohnhochhausanlage, Hamburg-Grindelberg, 1945-1956* (Munich: Dölling und Galitz, 2007).

¹⁸¹ Bruno E. Werner, *Neues Bauen in Deutschland* (Munich: F. Bruckmann, 1952).

models, future forms of habitation become imaginable'.¹⁸² These forms of habitation include both the housing blocks discernible in the model of the rebuilt town, and the urban space between buildings. The models offer an image of a new and whole built environment, with domestic and public spaces, ready to accommodate the populace. The metaphor of the 'lens' of the model is thoroughly appropriate. The visual encounter with the model entails a specific mode of interpellation of the viewer. These images – both the models surveyed by an exhibition visitor and the aerial view simulated in these photographs – work to distance the viewer of the late 1940s from their individual experience of occupying the spaces of Germany's destroyed cities, offering instead an abstract image of space which can better be made to symbolise a new home. This abstraction, as Puff remarks, offers the postwar viewer 'scopic control over a cityscape pregnant with painful memories and emotions'.¹⁸³ This address by the model to the viewer, replicated in these photographs, again redefines the notion of rubble processing (*Trümmerverwertung*). It is the use of ruin imagery to process or think through the problem of remaking habitable buildings and urban spaces. The absence of people from the model suggests precisely this. It is a space awaiting habitation.

The first substantial section of the book covers housing and the first image in this section is of the Grindelhochhäuser (fig. 3.4.4). Like the models, the image is unpopulated and it too addresses the viewer with an invitation to inhabit the space. The space of the image is dominated by the building, but certain aspects work to open it up to the viewer. Trees stand in front of the building, mediating its scale so that it avoids being too imposing. Other organic shapes, like those of the clouds, also work to soften the regularity and angularity of the shapes within the frame. Owing to corrected perspective, though shot at ground level, there is no obvious distortion such as divergent or convergent vertical lines. Most notably, a path leads from the bottom left of the image, coming centre frame and then leading directly towards the building. The sense of a three-dimensional space that could be entered by the viewer – already present in the naturalistic style of the image – is heightened by this path. It works as an invitation to imagine inhabiting the space depicted. Discussing Walter Benjamin's understanding of mimesis as 'a psychoanalytic term [...] which refers to a creative engagement with an object', Neil Leach has claimed of images like fig. 3.4.4, that,

¹⁸² Helmut Puff, 'Ruins as Models: Displaying Destruction in Postwar Germany', in *Ruins of Modernity*, ed. by Julia Hell and Andreas Schönle (Durham, NC.: Duke University Press, 2008), pp. 253–69 (p. 256).

¹⁸³ Puff, pp. 253–69 (p. 266).

‘Through the architectural photograph we may read ourselves into the architecture. [...] Photographs can therefore be seen to [be] charged with the potential to open up a “world.”’¹⁸⁴ This notion of an imaginative occupation of the photograph allows us to understand better the operation of architectural photography in the early postwar years in West Germany and to contrast it with that exemplified by the *Architectural Review*. Such imagery does not simply offer an appearance of the world; it invites the imagination of inhabiting the image. In the case of *Neues Bauen im Deutschland*, the photographs of the model, of the Grindelhochhäuser and of other housing developments achieve a mimetic effect in this sense of imaginative inhabitation. They offer an image of a habitable postwar world not simply by depicting new forms of habitation – city spaces and tower blocks – but by creating a space to imagine occupying; a virtual, new Germany which the viewer is invited both to visualise and picture themselves in. The sort of visual pleasures offered by the townscape photo-essays or emphasised by Hitchcock regarding Churchill Gardens are quite different. The pages of the *Review* consistently privileged and prioritised the visibility of urban space over any experiential or haptic aspect. However, this distinction was neither entrenched along national lines, nor enduring. As will be discussed below, in the later 1950s, publications in West Germany came to share this ocularcentric stance.

A more direct example of this invitation to imaginatively inhabit the homes and public spaces of the new Federal Republic can be seen in the magazine *Constanze* (fig. 3.4.5).¹⁸⁵ ‘Frau Nancy B.’ is pictured inhabiting the building and using its modern appliances. She is the reader’s surrogate or avatar and the Grindelhochhäuser represents a whole community, accommodating not only the home, but shops and restaurants.¹⁸⁶ Stressing the modernisation of domestic space and the public sphere, the fourteen photographs project an image of everyday life in a tower block. Like a comparable article in *Illustrated* (figs. 3.4.6 and 3.4.7) which depicted a family living on the new Stafford Cripps estate in Finsbury,¹⁸⁷ the *Constanze* article works to promote

¹⁸⁴ Neil Leach, ‘Walter Benjamin, Mimesis and the Dreamworld of Photography’, in *Intersections: Architectural Histories and Critical Theories*, ed. by Iain Borden and Jane Rendell (Abingdon: Routledge, 2000), pp. 27–38 (pp. 33 & 35).

¹⁸⁵ ‘Im Hochhaus wohnt sich’s besser!’, *Constanze: Die Zeitschrift für die Frau*, 1 March 1951, pp. 8–9.

¹⁸⁶ There is a repeated attempt in the three examples considered here – Marseille, Pimlico and Hamburg – to create a micro-community. The absence of amenities and of a sense of community, however, has been a consistent criticism of the many emulations of these early postwar experiments which were built in the later 1950s and 1960s.

¹⁸⁷ George Bruce, ‘A New Life – Eleven Floors Up’, *Illustrated*, 13 March 1954, pp. 11–13.

the new spaces of high-rise living. The experience of one individual or one family is photographed and recounted in the text. The notion of collective living which the high-rise implies is played down. In *Constanze*, the image of the building is literally toned down, the building appearing in muted greys in an establishing shot while the everyday life of Frau Nancy is reported in high-contrast black and white. Frau Nancy's verdict is superimposed on this muted image of the building: 'High-rise living is better!' The final lines of the article read:

According to the town planner, high-rise blocks are one of the most recent and interesting problems. And the best compliment about the performance of German architects was made in a French architectural journal on January 21, 1951: 'It is a paradox that of all the European countries, it is the one whose social, economic and political balance was shaken most by the war, that has found the impetus and creative force to plan and build an architectural experiment of this magnitude in record time.'¹⁸⁸

This effort to promote new forms of urban habitation in a popular fortnightly woman's magazine by appeal to an international perspective on Germany and by reference to the architectural press is particularly noteworthy.¹⁸⁹ These short, seemingly banal comments capture the significance of mass housing in the postwar period. It was a topic intimately connected with national identity and image; a topic which ensured that architecture (which gained heightened significance during the war in all three comparator countries) was sustained as a central concern of the public sphere in the postwar period. In all three nations, the construction of public housing was about constructing a modern postwar self-image. For the Federal Republic in particular, it was about being seen to be modern by others. In this context, and through publications like the photographic magazines and the architectural press, public housing became a

¹⁸⁸ 'Nach Auffassung der Städtebauer sind Hochhäuser eines der aktuellsten und interessantesten Probleme. Und das schönste Kompliment über die Leistung der deutschen Architekten machte eine französische Architekturzeitung am 21. Januar 1951: „Es ist paradox, daß unter allen europäischen Ländern das Land, dessen soziales, wirtschaftliches und politisches Gleichgewicht durch den Krieg am stärksten erschüttert wurde, den nötigen Schwung und die schöpferische Kraft findet, einen architektonischen Versuch dieses Ausmaßes in einer Rekordzeit zu planen und zu bauen“' (p. 9).

¹⁸⁹ In 1954, *Constanze* (published in Hamburg) was reported as having a circulation of 445,000 (*Germany Today: Facts and Figures* (Frankfurt am Main: A. Metzner, 1954), p. 200).

key site of an increasingly internationalised architectural discourse and a broader transnational visual culture.

The international interest in German reconstruction is demonstrated by the publication of *Neues Bauen im Deutschland* in a second, English-language edition, *Modern Architecture in Germany* (1956).¹⁹⁰ In France, a raft of publications concerning Franco-German relations also reflected this interest. Published by the Bureau international de liaison et de documentation, for instance, *Architecture et reconstruction en Allemagne* (1952) was a special issue of the *Revue mensuelle des questions allemandes*.¹⁹¹ An edited volume of essays, it used many of the same photographs which appeared in *Neues Bauen im Deutschland* and the architectural journals of all three countries, to illustrate a study of Cologne by Rudolf Schwarz amongst others. Yet, while the architectural photographs are similar or the same, this example throws up some interesting problems for historical analysis. In short, when ranged alongside more searching or critical commentaries, these photographs become differently inflected, suggesting the polysemous nature of the photograph and the determining capacities of the caption or accompanying text. Architectural photography of the period can, in particular publications, be seen to offer a critical perspective on the modernist architectural solutions to the housing problem, *problematizing the image* of a building like the Grindelhochhäuser.

In an article titled, 'Le problème du logement', Mainz architect, Heinz Laubach, tackles questions of monumentality, standardisation, housing need and human need.¹⁹² Photographs of housing blocks in Bonn, Frankfurt and Stuttgart accompany

¹⁹⁰ The English language edition featured one condensed article rather than the contributions from Hoffman, Schwarz et al. in the German language original. The images were the same, excluding the front cover which carried a photograph of the Bundeshaus – perhaps reflecting the publishers' assumptions of the relative interests or pre-occupations of different audiences. For Germans, it was housing; for the British, the new political order (Bruno E. Werner, *Modern Architecture in Germany*, 2nd edn (Munich: F. Bruckmann, 1956)).

¹⁹¹ (*Architecture et reconstruction en Allemagne* (Offenbourg en Bade: Bureau international de liaison et de documentation, 1952)). Begun in 1945 in the French zone of occupation, the French language series titled 'Documents' (of which this publication was a part) was complemented by a German language publication titled 'Dokumente'. Both publications, aimed at improving and sustaining Franco-German relations, persist in the twenty-first century (Henri Ménudier, 'La Revue documents et le BILD: Les articles des années, 1945-1955', in *Passerelles et passeurs*, ed. by Gilbert Krebs (Asnières: Presses Sorbonne Nouvelle, 2002), pp. 233–256). It is presumably just a pleasing irony that the acronym of the publisher (B.I.L.D.) is German for image or photograph.

¹⁹² Heinz Laubach, 'Le Problème du logement', in *Architecture et reconstruction en Allemagne* (Offenbourg en Bade: Bureau international de liaison et de documentation, 1952), pp. 42–49.

the text, along with one of the Grindelhochhäuser (fig. 3.4.8). They are typical architectural photographs of the time. Understated, they are naturalistic, eschewing the visual drama of the worm's eye view, for instance. Though largely unpopulated, organic forms like grass and trees are used to off-set or frame the considerable *mass* of mass housing. But this standardised visual rhetoric is here made ambiguous by its juxtaposition with Laubach's questioning commentary. For instance, a photograph of three balconies from a Frankfurt housing block (fig. 3.4.9) appears on the same page as Laubach's comments on monumentality. The architect suggests that, while there may be reasons to assume that people want monumental architecture (as a symbol of oneself, the home can counteract a sense of isolation or insignificance, allowing one to subsume anonymity in a collective image), such arguments are illusory.¹⁹³ Monumentality, for Laubach, was a problem, not a solution. It had crept into housing construction because modernist architecture began by designing industrial building. It had resulted in proportions totally inappropriate to the domestic setting.¹⁹⁴ Alternative forms remained to be found or created, Laubach contended: 'The modern conception of construction is not yet sufficiently differentiated to capture the essence of each task and elevate it to a visible form'.¹⁹⁵ Unlike László Moholy-Nagy's iconic shot of the balconies at the Bauhaus building in Dessau (fig. 3.4.10), reproduced in *Malerie Fotografie Film* (1927) nearly three decades earlier, the image accompanying Laubach's argument neither trumpets the new angular forms of modernist architecture nor draws attention to the 'new vision' offered by the camera.¹⁹⁶ Rather, it strives for transparency; choosing naturalistic representation over self-conscious camera angles and striking composition. Yet, in conjunction with Laubach's argument, the photograph accentuates the angularity of the forms (the balcony floors, the frames that hold the

¹⁹³ 'On a de bonnes raisons de penser que l'homme d'aujourd'hui veut se monumentaliser – donc monumentaliser son miroir architectural, son logis –, parce que, seul, ils se sent trop petit et trop infime, parce qu'il se réfugie dans l'anonymat pour pouvoir réapparaître sous forme collective. Il veut sa demeure dépasse tout les autres choses, et meme les lieux où il voudrait célébrer la fête multiforme de la communauté humaine' (Laubach, pp. 42–49 (p. 44)). Based in Mainz, Laubach would have been aware of the radical reconstruction plan proposed by Marcel Lods, appointed by the French military government for what was the capital of the French occupation zone from mid-1946. In the plan, made public in January 1948, housing was to be high-rise in a completely re-modelled area of town. The plan was rejected by the city council and Lods left Mainz in April 1948. The council ultimately 'chose a traditionalist form of reconstruction' (Diefendorf, *In the Wake of War*, pp. 195–7 & 68).

¹⁹⁴ Laubach's comments recall Adorno's description of 'functional modern habitations' as 'factory sites that have strayed into the consumption sphere, devoid of all relation to the occupant' (Adorno, p. 38).

¹⁹⁵ 'La conception moderne de la construction n'est pas encore suffisamment différenciée, pour saisir l'essence de chaque tâche et élever à une forme visible' (Laubach, pp. 42–49 (p. 44)).

¹⁹⁶ László Moholy-Nagy, *Painting, Photography, Film* (Cambridge, MA.: MIT Press, 1969), p. 58.

frosted glass, the shadows and the downpipe) in another manner. The image, while it seems like a window onto the scene which one can imaginatively inhabit, risks – alongside Laubach's critical voice – being revealed as little more than a patterned surface, refusing the building's three-dimensionality and emphasising visuality. The photographic effacement of the building's materiality finds a correlative in the fact that the interior of the building is too underexposed for the viewer to be able to see through the actual windows of the building into the interior, resulting in an image in which vision is restricted to the exterior surface.

Thus, architectural photography of the period can be seen to be unstable in its significance, not consistently working to present a positive perspective on the modernist solutions to the housing crisis. In the case of Laubach's article, text and image together explicitly question the mode of housing construction and implicitly problematise the representational strategies of architectural photography. The absence of people suggests not an invitation to imagine oneself inhabiting the picture and the flats, but a potentially antagonistic relation between humans and the new living spaces being constructed for them. The minimal variations of the grid-form façades and the angular buildings set against grey, featureless skies sit uneasily alongside Laubach's comments. What might, alongside a different essay or caption, be viewed as pleasing order has the potential to tip over into the representation of stark, alienating spaces.

Crucially, however, Laubach's critical stance did not escape the ocularcentrism of postwar architectural discourse. His critique of housing construction is couched in distinctly visual terms and illustrated by the architectural photography of the moment. Like Horder, Laubach tied together the housing unit, the family unit and the nation, suggesting that family relations need to be reconstructed, as well as urban and domestic spaces. For Laubach, the tension between individualism and collective identity was the defining issue of the postwar moment. The built environment had the capacity to rebuild family relations, since the built environment is '*the visible form of social structures*'.¹⁹⁷ The stakes of this debate were, for Laubach as for many of his contemporaries, nothing short of the future of civilisation.¹⁹⁸ In disrupting both the

¹⁹⁷ 'Les rapports des familles entre elles doivent, eux aussi, être revus. Ils sont déterminés par l'opposition entre l'individualisme et le collectivisme, qui domine notre époque; ils se concrétisent dans *la figure visible* de la structure sociale, c'est-à-dire dans la construction' (Laubach, pp. 42–49 (p. 43), my italics).

¹⁹⁸ In the first paragraph, the architect cites the 'Mensch und Raum' event at Darmstadt in 1951: 'If we do not succeed, in a short time, to build houses which deliver an authentic transformation of the environment and the human, we will not only have lost the war, we will also have lost our

narrative underpinning the dominant solutions to the housing crisis (high-rise blocks) and the dominant modes of architectural photography (naturalistic establishing shots, close-up shots of details capturing the modern aesthetic and emphasising light and space), Laubach's essay does not wholly reject the accepted terms of the debate. Visuality remains the central ground of discussion, thereby binding even dissenting or questioning voices into the same discursive formation. Regional or traditional architectural styles in France underwent a transformation in which this centrality of visibility exerted a gravitational pull on architectural debate and practice. Likewise, in Germany, those who took issue with modernist architecture could not but engage with it in terms that stressed the centrality of visibility.

Gerhard Puhmann's *Die Stalinallee* (fig. 3.4.11, 1952) – published in the same year as the volume which carried Laubach's article – provides an instructive counter-example from the newly established German Democratic Republic (GDR).¹⁹⁹ This publication demonstrates the importance of architectural photography in a very different political situation. Moreover, as a very different approach to questions of individualism and collective identity touched on by Laubach, Puhmann's book casts into relief some of the central concerns of the visual culture related to architectural discourse in the three comparator countries of Western Europe. Construction of Stalinallee occurred in a period of uniquely charged ideological significance for architecture in the two recently established German nations – particularly mass housing. Rogier notes that, notwithstanding debates between traditionalists and modernists, between 1945 and 1950 modernism was associated with 'liberal, anti-Fascist social policies, and it provided the dominant paradigms in both East and West Germany'.²⁰⁰ After 1950, the symbolism of modernist architecture in the GDR became problematic, as officials of the new state worked to construct an image of the nation which distinguished it from its

future peace' (Laubach, p. 42). Frank provides a summary of the discussion, chaired by Otto Bartning, between intellectuals (like Martin Heidegger and José Ortega y Gasset) and architects (such as Egon Eiermann, Sep Ruf, Hans Scharoun, Rudolf Schwarz, and Hans Schwippert) regarding 'the ideological conflicts which divided German architects and the function of architecture in overcoming the feeling of lack of homeland and roots following the second world war' (Frank, 58–67 (p. 42)). The Darmstadt event was accompanied by an exhibition of the same title which provided a broad survey of art and architecture of the previous fifty years.

¹⁹⁹ Gerhard Puhmann, *Die Stalinallee: Nationales Aufbauprogramm, 1952* (Berlin: Verlag der Nation, 1952).

²⁰⁰ Rogier, pp. 165–90 (p. 171).

neighbour and managed its associations with the Soviet Union.²⁰¹ This effort was expressed in yet another counter-statement to the Athens Charter, *The Principles of Town Planning (Grundsätze des Städtebaues)*. The sixteen numbered principles, published in the Ministerial Gazette of the GDR on 16 September 1950, advocated an architecture which drew on the past, but celebrated urbanism; which rejected the idea of the garden city as adopted by Le Corbusier and extolled the square, the high street and the tower block.²⁰² The proposed synthesis of modern means of construction and traditional forms is exemplified by the terra cotta decorations and pillars on the façade of the early blocks of Stalinallee (fig. 3.4.12) and the domes of the Frankfurter Tor, designed by Hermann Henselmann (fig. 3.4.13). Such 'carefully programmed references to local heritage'²⁰³ tried to negotiate the distinction between Soviet- and Nazi-style neo-classicism.²⁰⁴ Yet, following the death of Stalin and the measured retraction by Nikita Khrushchev of the promotion of a Socialist Realism style in 1954, the continuing construction of what became Karl-Marx-Allee after 1961, proceeded in a style which strove much less vigorously to distinguish itself from housing construction in Western Europe.²⁰⁵

Published in this period of charged significance for housing architecture, Puhlmann's book records the construction process and is itself an effort to construct the image and identity of the new state. The photobook is peppered with slogans which, although perhaps more bombastic, deploy similar terms to architectural debate and the promotion of modernist public housing in the West: 'High-rise living is good';

²⁰¹ The template for *Die Stalinallee* was provided by the multi-lingual Stalinist propaganda vehicle, *USSR under Construction*. While the former employed a similar visual rhetoric, the production values of the latter were markedly higher.

²⁰² The publication was the result of a visit to Moscow by Lothar Bolz (Minister of Reconstruction), Kurt Liebke (Director of the Institute for Urban Planning in the Ministry of Construction), Edmund Colle (head of the Berlin Building Authority), Kurt Leucht (Head of Dresden City Planning Office) and others.

²⁰³ Rogier, pp. 165–90 (p. 175).

²⁰⁴ Rogier cites Durth on this bizarre situation: 'Thus a remarkable exchange of places came about in which politically engaged architects in the DDR who had linked socialism with modernism were obligated to unloved national traditions, while their colleagues in the west, who had only a short time earlier belonged to the circle around Speer, now appeared as proponents of modernist architecture' (Rogier, pp. 165–90 (p. 172)).

²⁰⁵ See Nikita Khrushchev, 'Remove Shortcomings in Design, Improve Work of Architects', in *Architecture Culture, 1943-1968: A Documentary Anthology*, ed. by Joan Ockman (New York: Rizzoli, 1993), pp. 184–8.

‘The construction of the future’; ‘Dreams become reality’.²⁰⁶ The imagery, however, is markedly different in three ways: the mass of people depicted, the capturing of the construction process, and the visualisation of the buildings’ scale. The title page of *Die Stalinallee* makes use of ruin imagery, contrasting vistas down a street lined by the shells of buildings on the left, with blocks receding seemingly into infinity on the right. The ruin images are used as a foil to the image of the building, but the image created here is not primarily for imaginative inhabiting. What *Die Stalinallee* depicts is the process of construction by the people. Like the ruin photobooks of Dresden, Puhlmann’s book also featured visualisations of rubble clearance (figs. 3.4.14 and 3.4.15). While mechanization is lauded, it is the collective contribution by the people (men, women and children) to the task of reconstruction which is emphasised above everything else. When named individuals are isolated for praise in recognition of their contribution, it is their contribution to communal effort that is stressed (fig. 3.4.16). This image of the process of construction by the people is also the construction of an image *of the people* and of the state; an image of productivity, solidarity and collective will and effort. Puhlmann’s book addresses the psychological dimension of reconstruction, not by inviting the imaginative occupation of modernist housing blocks like the Grindelhochhäuser, but by constructing an image of the GDR and the people with which viewers are invited to associate themselves.²⁰⁷

Reflecting this image of the nation’s productivity, solidarity and collective effort, is *Stalinallee* itself, the photographs of which consistently stress its scale. The image projected of this architectural undertaking is of accomplishment measured in terms of sheer size. It is a project whose image is conceived to impress. That scale is mirrored in the sheer number of photographs with which Puhlmann’s book documents the construction – nearly 300 images are reproduced in this 204-page book. *Stalinallee* – as both image and building – is a form of monumentality different from that discussed by Hitchcock regarding Churchill Gardens or represented by the Unité building in Marseille. The individual elements (such as the concrete frame or the roofline detailing) are not considered as the chief vehicle of signification. It is the monumental whole which is the principal message – the scale and unity of the project. The individual’s effort is framed as a contribution to the monumental construction of this architectural

²⁰⁶ ‘Im Hochhaus ist gut wohnen’; ‘Die Bauweise der Zukunft’; ‘Traum wird Wirklichkeit’ (Puhlmann, n. pag).

²⁰⁷ Such invitations to identify and associate will be discussed in more detail in the following chapter with regard to depictions of Berlin in the postwar illustrated press.

project and, by implication, the nation. Whether they are craftsmen (fig. 3.4.17) or painters (fig. 3.4.18), they contribute to the national effort and also to the national image. This is in marked contrast to the depiction of individuals and families in the articles from *Illustrated* and *Constanze* discussed above, for instance, where the collective is downplayed. Martin Parr and Gerry Badger suggest this book is as 'factual' as a company report and 'the most benign of propaganda books'.²⁰⁸ However, the words benign and propaganda are as odd as the pairing of 'factual' and company report. Francesca Rogier gives a more insightful analysis, describing how the propaganda images surrounding the project – many of the posters of which are reproduced in Puhlmann's book – 'illustrate the way in which the design and construction of Stalinallee was part of a dual process of ideological definition and social restructuring that took place on many levels during the first decade of reconstruction in the GDR'.²⁰⁹ The depiction of the people, the picturing of the reconstruction process, and the visualisation of the buildings' monumental scale were all part of this process of reconstruction in (and simultaneous construction of) the GDR (figs. 3.4.19 and 3.4.20). It was a process in which collectivism – as opposed to individualism – was offered as the foundation of a refashioned imagined community.

This creation of a national self-image was deliberately performed in full view of not only East and West German citizens, but the international community. Peter Krieger explains lucidly how the reconstruction in both of the German states – and particularly the divided city of Berlin – acted 'like a shop window' in which to display the successes of each new state: 'Amplified by a broad range of re-educational measures designed to help the German publics comprehend the "messages" of their cities' recovery, the competition between two world powers was fought on a semiotic field that condensed cultural, social, technological, and economic achievements: the city'.²¹⁰ The suggestion of visual consumption that the metaphor of the shop window suggests is apposite. The physical spaces of buildings and cities were a manifestation of the ideological tussle between east and west during the Cold War, but the buildings were not simply consumed *in situ*. They were photographed, reproduced and circulated far beyond their original physical locations. Comparisons are often drawn between the

²⁰⁸ Parr and Badger, I, p. 182.

²⁰⁹ Rogier, pp. 165–90 (p. 176).

²¹⁰ Peter Krieger, 'Learning from America: Postwar Urban Recovery in West Germany', in *Transactions, Transgressions, Transformations: American Culture in Western Europe and Japan*, ed. by Heide Fehrenbach and Uta G. Poiger (Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2000), pp. 187–207 (p. 189).

construction of Stalinallee, overseen by Henselmann, and the Interbau exhibition of 1957 in West Berlin – a development in a cleared area of the Tiergarten, called the Hansaviertel, in which fifty-one internationally-renowned architects from thirty countries constructed forty-five new buildings (many of them tower blocks) for 8000 inhabitants.²¹¹ This ‘city of tomorrow’ is an important reference point in German architectural history. But a fruitful comparison for this cultural history of postwar urban photography can be made between Puhlmann’s *Die Stalinallee* and a book written by one of the Interbau architects, namely, Klaus Müller-Rehm’s *Wohnbauten von Heute* (1955).²¹² This book is representative of a genre of architectural guidebooks that flourished in the 1950s which reveals much about the nature of the postwar consumption of architecture. In short, *Wohnbauten von Heute*, with its English translation of the captions, exemplifies the further development of a cross-national cultural exchange and the consumption of architecture through photography – a circulation of images in which housing remained a charged topic.

The key characteristics of photography in *Wohnbauten von Heute* follow those referred to above in discussion of the *Architectural Review*: tightly cropped images or photographs with a striking composition which produce a sense of abstract form or pattern; images which focus on a particular architectural detail, again with an emphasis on form over function; and the motif of a building framed using either something organic or a view through an opening in another building. Indeed, the imagery in *Wohnbauten von Heute* is not just similar; there is a repetition of images as well as representational strategies. Liénard’s flattened-out image of the Marseille block again reappears (fig. 3.4.21), alongside interiors that emphasise the play of light and shadow. The final image of the Unité building (fig. 3.4.22) – like the shot of the Grindelhochhäuser in *Neues Bauen im Deutschland* (fig. 3.4.6) – has a path leading from bottom left to the building, inviting the imaginative occupation of the scene depicted. It also uses filters to emphasise the organic form of the clouds by polarising the light and darkening the roofline of the building perhaps the better to manage its massive scale. The coverage of the Pimlico housing estate includes photographs by Peter Pitt (e.g., fig. 3.4.23). A shot across the Thames shows a boat in front of the building’s skyline (fig. 3.4.24). This image suggests a comparison between the forms of

²¹¹ Rogier’s comparison demonstrated that – although it was presented as an example of construction under capitalism – Interbau constituted ‘a government-driven project adopting the guise of capitalist development’ (Rogier, pp. 165–90 (p. 181)).

²¹² Klaus Müller-Rehm, *Wohnbauten von Heute* (Berlin: Rembrandt Verlag, 1955).

the tower-blocks and the boat, returning to the mode of comparison that Corbusier explicitly made through photography between contemporary buildings and automobiles, aeroplanes and ocean liners in *Vers une architecture*. A tower block in Harlow appears to shelter under the bough of an ancient oak (fig. 3.4.25), following an 'aerial view' of a model of the new town.²¹³

Like the images in the *Review*, photographs in books like *Wohnbauten von Heute* partake in an ocularcentric approach to architecture in which, as Morpurgo noted, the image of architecture 'overcomes architecture itself'.²¹⁴ The upshot of this in terms of design, as has been argued throughout this chapter, was a devaluing of questions of the experiential quality of spaces. The upshot in terms of publishing was the flourishing of a mode of architectural consumption through photographic books. Many books emerged which grouped and compared the work of an international group of architects, often to the exclusion of the Soviet bloc. Through such paper versions of the Interbau idea, architectural photography became a more mainstream publishing phenomenon. But it was a very particular phenomenon in stark contrast to Puhlmann's propaganda. No less ideological, such publications offered up architecture for consumption through the pages of the book or magazine in a similar way to fashion. Images of architecture became part of the wider visual culture, the circulation and consumption of which was an expression of the consumer culture emerging as more prevalent following in Western Europe following Marshall Plan aid. In other words, despite its obvious permanence and un-take-home-ability, architecture became another consumable product *through its image*. Of course, the transnational circulation of architectural photography was not novel by this point in the twentieth century. These numerous publications mark a quantitative and qualitative difference which has continued into the twenty-first century with innumerable successful coffee-table books and exhibition catalogues.²¹⁵ While Puhlmann's *Die Stalinallee* worked to construct an

²¹³ Additionally, as seen elsewhere, sections, plans and perspectival diagrams complement the photographs. Arguably, these are a secondary attraction, offering more often than not an air of technologically-grounded authority to the photographic images rather than providing detailed and legible information on the building. Riley made the same observation regarding the 1932 exhibition which showcased the International Style: 'The curators' apparent unwillingness to diminish the importance of the photographs was at the expense of any readily legible reading of the plans' (Riley, p. 76).

²¹⁴ Morpurgo, 124–6 (p. 125).

²¹⁵ A good example of this shift is F. R. S. Yorke and Frederick Gibberd's, *The Modern Flat*. Although first published in 1937, the fourth edition published two decades later was completely redesigned and refocused exclusively on postwar work. It demonstrated not only the dramatic number of housing projects constructed in the decade after 1945, but also a change in the manner in which they were represented in and consumed through architectural photography,

image of architecture that expressed the achievements of the communist system in the postwar world, publications in the west created images which were themselves consumer products – they were *part of the system* being set in opposition to that of the East.²¹⁶

These key characteristics – the style of photographic representation, the organisation around building types and national contributions to an international modernist movement in architecture, the publication of bi- or tri-lingual editions – recur time and again in books published in the 1950s. Many of the same images are used to represent the same projects. These images were, more often than not, of the buildings prior to their being occupied – in a state of limbo between completion and habitation. It is in this context of the visual consumption of architecture through photography that the Stalinallee and Interbau projects are best understood. Over the twentieth century, photography gained prominence in architectural discourse and practice. In the context of postwar privations and Cold War antagonisms, housing was a topic ripe for ideological exploitation. Postwar visual culture – propagandistic in the East and consumerist in the West – pursued this exploitation in contrasting ways, but on the same disputed territory of individual and collective identities. As the image of each opposing system sought to assert itself, housing not only grew in symbolic significance, but in scale. Rogier terms this phenomenon the ‘inversion of monumentality as housing [which] elevated the dwelling to the status of political symbol’.²¹⁷ Interestingly, however, Müller-Rehm’s book is split fairly equally between private houses and public housing; in this can be read the waning of the intense ideological symbolism of public housing in the first postwar decade. While architectural photography facilitated this battle of images, the photographic consumption of architecture in a sense levelled out building

with the photographs and the buildings being framed as aesthetic visual objects the qualities of which were in a sense divorced from the buildings’ existence as a physical or material entity. Illustrating the manner in which a building became reduced to a handful of striking, unpopulated, monochrome images, the photographs in figs. 3.4.21, 3.4.24 and 3.4.25 all appeared in the fourth edition – which the authors described as ‘really a picture book’ (F. R. S. Yorke and Frederick Gibberd, *The Modern Flat*, 4th edn (London: Architectural Press, 1958), pp. 101, 28, 32 & 7).

²¹⁶ Other examples include: Karl Kaspar and Herbert Hoffmann, *New German Architecture* (London: Architectural Press, 1956); Hubert Hoffmann and Karl Kaspar, *Neue deutsche Architektur* (Stuttgart: Gerd Hatje, 1956); Hansmartin Bruckmann, *Neuer Wohnbau in England* (Stuttgart: Karl Krämer Verlag, 1960); Paulhans Peters, *Wohnhochhäuser: Punkthäuser / Point Blocks / Immeubles Tours* (Munich: George D.W. Calveley, 1958); Trevor Dannatt, *Modern Architecture in Britain* (London: Batsford, 1959); Jürgen Joedicke, *A History of Modern Architecture*, trans. by J. C. Palmes (London: Architectural Press, 1958); Maurice Besset, *New French Architecture / Neue französische Architektur* (Teufen: Niggli, 1967).

²¹⁷ Rogier, pp. 165–90 (p. 184).

types, making the photograph the object of interest and rendering the function of any given building less of a pressing concern. The pleasing shape and form of the buildings were prioritised over their uses as bus depots, schools, parliaments, private homes, or workers' housing estates.

The most instructive images of Müller-Rehms' book are of a small, four-storey apartment block in Cologne. Fig 3.4.26 shows the detail of an exterior. The living room projects out from the shell of the building, creating a floor to ceiling window which is on two sides of the corner. The light falls upon the building in the foreground; buildings in the background are in shade. The rooms above the one that occupies the centre of the image have their curtains drawn, obscuring the view in. Attention is drawn to the living room, thus, through the staging of the image or *mise en scène*, the composition and also the caption.²¹⁸ There is an invitation to imaginatively occupy this particular room. Yet, the terms of the inhabitation emphasise the visual. Turning the page, one finds the view out of what is presumably the same room (fig. 3.4.27). Isolated on a page by itself, the image contains an empty chair facing the window, and a book placed to one side on a glass table. The caption again stresses the glass construction.²¹⁹ The view of the building from the exterior, its glass construction bathed in light; the view of the interior looking out, with its invitation to partake in the outlook presented – this duet of images stresses the looking at and looking out of architecture. Other examples (fig. 3.4.28) fulfil the promise of this invitation. In this photobook of the mid-fifties and the many like it, architecture is not simply a new home for individuals or for national identities. It is not primarily about making the world habitable. It has segued into the consumption of the world as a visual phenomenon. The invitation to imagine inhabiting is more a matter of consumption – consumption of the space, consumption of the image of the space – than it is of self-definition.²²⁰ This visual consumption of urban space was enacted in the Interbau project by a ski lift which could give the visitor to the site their own aerial view of the buildings familiar from the views on the pages of books, journals and magazines of the previous decade or more. Three decades later in 1984, Morpurgo wrote about 'the habit, which we all have by now, of "leafing" through architecture by means of the innumerable photographic representations and the ever more "natural" presence of the photographic medium in our visual culture'.²²¹ As the work of different

²¹⁸ 'Blick aus die [sic.] gläsernen Wohnraumausbauten' (Müller-Rehm, p. 169).

²¹⁹ 'Der gläserne Ausbau von innen' (Müller-Rehm, p. 170).

²²⁰ This analysis of space, glass and vision is indebted to the work of Beatriz Colomina.

²²¹ Morpurgo, 124–6 (p. 124).

nations was collected in books like *Wohnbauten von Heute*, so too did the formerly distinct architectural discourses and practices of the three comparator countries come to inhabit an increasingly homogenous and transnational visual culture.

3.5 Conclusion: The Triumph of Photographic Architecture

People's ideas have been formed by newspapers, magazines, films, television, so that now they think a better way of living is possible. What they really want is to bring up their children in the air and the sun. Public opinion is stronger than ever before, and in the next decade it will demand a new and better way of living. There is an immense need for light.

Pierre Surdeau, French Minister of Construction²²²

This chapter has considered the traffic between architectural photography and architectural style regarding mass housing in the first postwar decade. This includes how aerial, ruin and slum photography were implicated in the significance of 'planning' and 'reconstruction'; the manner in which architectural photography was mobilised in the task of negotiating national reconciliation and reinvention; the vocabulary of visibility which pervaded architectural debate; how architectural photography was caught up in debates about monumentality; the manner in which certain images invited the viewer to imaginatively inhabit the scene depicted and others problematised the representational strategies of architectural photography; and the particular visual pleasures that architectural photography offered as postwar buildings (and books) began to proliferate. Common to all these different images, uses and inflections across the three comparator countries was an emerging dominance of ocularcentrism in architectural discourse of the period 1947 to 1954 – an emphasis on visibility underpinned by architectural photography. The discussion of public housing sustained by professionals, politicians and the press resulted in a transnational circulation of images. The centrality of architectural photography to this public debate – the defining impact such representations had on the terms in which discussion of public housing was conducted and the style in which housing solutions were constructed – are highlighted in the above quotation from the incoming French Minister of Construction in an English-language edition of the French magazine, *Réalités*. The two-dimensional space of the photograph had a profound impact on the three-dimensional spaces of mass housing.

²²² *Realities*, 97 (1958), p. 78.

From the mid 1950s and into the 1960s, public housing continued to be an issue and large-scale construction projects proliferated. In France, ZUPs (*zones à urbaniser en priorité*) were established to tackle the problem of shanty towns (*bidonvilles*) and unplanned urban growth. From the late 1950s to late 1960s, these saw the creation of many new housing districts (*les grands ensembles*) dominated by high-rise blocks. In Britain, a renewed effort at slum clearance took place from 1954. Prime Minister Macmillan reached his objective of building 300,000 homes per year in 1953 and exceeded it in 1954.²²³ In West Germany, 300,000 units were being built per year with public grants by private investors between 1950 and 1959. Ultimately, 15,000,000 new housing units would be built by 1978.²²⁴ Of course, not all new housing in the three comparator countries was in the form of high-rise developments. But as Ravetz notes, the tower block is a phenomenon that requires explanation. The 'merely mechanical repetition of "superblocks" stamped, as it were, over landscapes without reference to landform or local atmosphere' is one of the defining urban developments of the postwar decades.²²⁵ It is far from coincidental that Ravetz's characterisation is reminiscent of Roth's image of Roubaix in Bill's *Wiederaufbau* (1945, fig. 3.1.10).²²⁶ Photography alone does not account for the widespread uptake of this particular model of housing construction. Political exigencies, the desire to address urban sprawl, and developments in prosaic technology like cranes and lifts all played a part in shaping both style and planning. Gauthey describes an 'era of statistical architecture', bringing to mind the perceived economic sense of large-scale, high-density, prefabricated tower blocks.²²⁷ Nonetheless, along with ideas, inventions, individuals and incentives, images played a part in the discourse and practice of architecture which redesigned and redefined urban space in the postwar decade.

The ubiquity of photography in architectural discourse does not imply a simplistic causal link that explains the architecture of the late 1950s and 1960s. Rather,

²²³ Short, p. 49.

²²⁴ Declan Kennedy, pp. 55–74 (p. 5).

²²⁵ Ravetz, p. 103.

²²⁶ A number of tower blocks have become architectural icons, including some of Le Corbusier's Unité buildings, blocks in the Interbau development and Denys Lasdun's Keeling House in Bethnal Green, London – now refurbished as a gated community. Photography also plays its part in this afterlife of mass housing experiments from the twentieth century, through 'lifestyle' articles in the popular press and coffee table books. On tower-block chic, see Joe Moran, *Reading the Everyday* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2005), pp. 140–3.

²²⁷ 'L'ère de l'architecture statistique' (Gauthey, para. 16 of 24). Ravetz suggests this economic argument was itself more a matter of representation than reality (Ravetz, p. 104).

it prompts reflection on photography's position as a prominent part of a discursive field in which the visual came to dominate architectural design and town planning. While photography may not be wholly accountable for the form of these sites or structures, it should be held responsible in part for the failings of some of these later buildings as *living spaces*.²²⁸ Architectural photography of postwar housing played a central part in the ready focus on the surface and the form of the high-rise block over the interior living and lived-in spaces. A standardisation of the material and means of construction went hand in hand with a standardisation of the means and style of representation. A preoccupation with the image was integral to a lack of adequate reflection on inhabitation. (For instance, inhabitation was at first a prominent concern in West German architectural discourse and practice, but it was effectively squeezed out of the housing debate as a result of the cross-national circulation of architectural imagery and the Federal Republic's increasing importance as the shop window of democracy and the free market). Architectural spaces pictured devoid of humans, the aerial view, the photography of models and ruins, and the snapshot style of various *Architectural Review* campaigns – they all contributed after their own fashion to amplify and perpetuate an ocularcentric approach in the construction of postwar public housing across the three comparator countries.

The psychologist Oliver Sacks wrote of his experience of monocular blindness and the loss of stereoscopic vision: 'Space was once a hospitable, deep realm in which I could locate myself and wander at will. I could enter it, I lived in it, I had a spatial relationship to everything I could see. That sort of space no longer exists for me visually – or mentally'.²²⁹ The changed relationship with space ushered into postwar architectural practice by the prominence of architectural photography in cross-national architectural debate is a correlate of the process Sacks describes. The flattening of the space of the city onto the surface of the photograph – emphasising the visibility of architectural style and visual planning of urban space over and above lived, domestic, interior spaces – had a bearing on the very conception or mental existence of the basic unit of any structure, especially housing: the room. It all but disappeared from view. In

²²⁸ Ravetz has described the sense of 'encapsulation' which such housing can engender and the new liminal space of lifts, corridors and stairwells which were 'unfamiliar kinds of space [...] neither public nor private' (Alison Ravetz, *The Place of Home: English Domestic Environments, 1914-2000* (London: Spon Press, 1995), pp. 52–60). Lynsey Hanley has written about the 'wall in the head' to describe a sense of inertia or permanent exclusion such buildings can provoke, drawing on descriptions of another monumental postwar concrete construction – the Berlin Wall (Lynsey Hanley, *Estates: An Intimate History* (London: Granta, 2007), p. 149).

²²⁹ Oliver Sacks, *The Mind's Eye* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2010), p. 192.

Rebuilding Family Life in the Post-war World (1945), Horder stressed the importance of family and home to the challenge of reconstruction. But when it came to the representation and discussion of public housing in the public sphere, it was all too often the visual and not the familial or the domestic which defined the terms of both debate and practice. In both discussion and depiction, the principal focus was on the façade and the face of the city, not the interior as inhabited space. Aided and abetted by photography, privilege was repeatedly given to *urbanism* (the bricks and mortar of the built environment) and not *urban community* (the social life that takes place within that space). Only rarely did a writer like Rasmussen stress the experience of space over the visual apprehension.

In the mid-1950s a critique of postwar modernist architecture gained ground in Britain. Its development was narrated by Reyner Banham who described it as a generational conflict in which a younger cohort felt the prewar ideals of the Modern Movement had been discarded or defamed by the architectural establishment architects.²³⁰ He discussed the work of architects Alison and Peter Smithson under the label, New Brutalism.²³¹ The Smithsons' critique of postwar modernist architecture was not antithetical to what preceded it; it grew out of the emphasis on the visual, even as it tried to reintroduce some priority to inhabitation. For instance, in contrast to the functional city concept, the Smithsons offered an urban typology of the house, street, district and city, illustrating this conception of urban space with photographs of street life in East End London by Nigel Henderson. Likewise, the illustrations for their unsuccessful entry to the Golden Lane Estate competition in 1951 were a marked challenge to the current fashion in architectural imagery (fig 3.5.1). They used photocollage in a manner reminiscent of the interwar avant-garde. Banham (as much offering a theoretical underpinning to the movement as merely observing) stated that they aimed at 'validating the presence of human beings as part of the total image', adding with a tone of surprise that 'the perspectives had photographs of people pasted

²³⁰ Following the ninth CIAM congress (held in July 1953 in Aix-en-Provence, near to Marseille where Le Corbusier's Unité had been completed the year before) this new British avant-garde was associated with an international group of architects referred to as 'Team X' or 'Team 10'. Boyer has encapsulated the tension between the old guard and the new avant-garde as follows: 'A war broke out between the architectural "establishment" who manned the editorial staff of *AR* and a generation of battle-worn, hard-edged, mature students who wanted nothing to do with the visual disarray of the English suburbs or the compromises of the Picturesque' (M. Christine Boyer, 'An Encounter with History: The Postwar Debate Between the English Journals of Architectural Review and Architectural Design (1945-1960)', *Team 10 Online*, 2003, p. 6 <<http://www.team10online.org/research/papers/delft2/boyer.pdf>> [accessed 8 November 2011]).

²³¹ See Reyner Banham, 'The New Brutalism', *Architectural Review*, 118 (1955), 354-61; Reyner Banham, *The New Brutalism: Ethic or Aesthetic?* (London: Architectural Press, 1966).

on to the drawings, so that the human presence almost over-whelmed the architecture'.²³² Recently, Higgott has suggested that the photographs of Eric de Maré for the *Architectural Review* were an important influence on the Smithsons' experimental architecture: 'More than any polemic or lengthy rationale, they helped create a new language which expanded the possibilities of architectural design in post-war Britain'.²³³ This mobilisation of photography as a radical tool of research and experimentation recurred in the 1953 exhibition with photographer Nigel Henderson and artist Eduardo Paolozzi, *A Parallel of Life and Art*, which explored the quirky and quixotic images created by photography. Banham described it as an exploration of 'camera-eyed Western man' by a group 'sensitive' to how the camera had 'established its manner of seeing as the common visual currency of our time'.²³⁴

The relevance of this critique to the foregoing discussion of architectural photography and mass housing is that the terms on which criticism engaged with its target highlight the dominance of the photographic in postwar architectural discourse and practice. Banham acknowledged the centrality of visuality when he characterised 'the image' as 'one of the most intractable and the most useful terms in contemporary aesthetics'. He went on to offer a tripartite definition of a New Brutalist building: '(1), Memorability as an Image; (2), Clear exhibition of Structure; and (3), Valuation of Materials "as found"'.²³⁵ Thus, despite the different aesthetic qualities, the work of the Smithsons, like the endlessly repeated tower blocks, exhibits the ocularcentrism of postwar architecture. As Zimmerman has noted, 'The image saturation of postwar culture led Banham to collapse the distance between images of buildings and buildings

²³² Banham, 354-61 (p. 361).

²³³ Higgott, p. 104.

²³⁴ Reyner Banham, 'Parallel of life and Art', *Architectural Review*, 682 (1953), 259-61.

²³⁵ (Banham, 354-61 (p. 358 & 361)). In 1966, Banham seemed to partially retract this emphasis on visuality. He argued that debates like the *Review*'s 'Townscape' or 'Functional Tradition' campaigns were largely irrelevant to the younger generation of architects. Discussing the influence of the Unité building on the new avant-garde, he speculated on the origin of the term Brutalism: 'Le Corbusier himself described that concrete-work as "béton brut". Word and building stand together in the psychological history of post-war architecture, with an authority granted to few other concepts' (Banham, pp. 16 & 43). However, the image has to be included in any history of postwar architecture, along with word and building – a point made evident in Banham's choice of eight of Hervé's photographs of the Unité building to illustrate his discussion. The status of the Unité building as a seminal piece of architecture is attributable more to the propagandising of the architect – ably assisted by Hervé's photographs and their wide circulation – than to any unique characteristics of the building itself.

as images [...] the space of buildings and the space of images were permanently fused to one another'.²³⁶

Inviting the Smithsons to offer provocative comments on the developments of the preceding year, an editorial in *Architectural Design* may have declared that '1954 has been a key year'.²³⁷ In fact, the critique of the Modern Movement offered by their experimental architecture and explosive interjections into architectural debate did not change the course set for housing construction by that first postwar decade. Materiality may have made a measured re-emergence, with a greater use of rough-hewn concrete over the 'Kraft cheese' exterior Alison Smithson declaimed, but monumentality and visuality remained the guiding ideas and ideals. Their dominance defined the postwar meaning of the International Style. Hitchcock expressed uneasiness with the term in 1952:

The International Style was not presented, in the 1932 book which first gave currency to the phrase, as a closed system; nor was it intended to be the whole of modernist architecture, past, present, and future. Perhaps it has become convenient now to use the phrase chiefly to condemn the literal and unimaginative application of the design clichés of twenty-five years ago; if that is really the case, the term had better be forgotten. The "traditional architecture," which still bulked so large in 1932, is all but dead by now. The living architecture of the twentieth century may well be called merely 'modern'.²³⁸

The term 'International Style' in the interwar period covered a set of architectural projects which were less than international and much more than just a style. They represented a transatlantic development in architecture which was, in differing ways and to varying extents, as concerned with politics as aesthetics. Yet, in the postwar period, modernist architecture arguably became an international style, being reproduced far beyond the original transatlantic nations and without regard to the radical politics with which it was originally associated. In the interwar period,

²³⁶ Zimmerman, pp. 203–28 (p. 221).

²³⁷ Theo Crosby, 'The New Brutalism', *Architectural Design*, 1 (1955), p. 1.

²³⁸ Henry-Russell Hitchcock, 'The International Style Twenty Years After', in *Architecture Culture, 1943-1968: A Documentary Anthology*, ed. by Joan Ockman (New York: Rizzoli, 1993), pp. 137–48 (p. 148).

architectural photography was mobilised as propaganda on behalf of the radical politics of the Modern Movement. In the second postwar decade, image overtook politics, driving a boom in housing construction which may have superficially resembled the interwar and early postwar experiments of Marseille, London or Hamburg; but in actuality it had deteriorated into *mere style*, replicated the world over. It is this debased meaning of the term, 'the International Style', which Hitchcock tried to overwrite with talk of a 'living architecture of the twentieth century'.

The examples of the Unité building, Churchill Gardens and the Grindelhochhäuser reveal the extent to which questions of visibility and architecture in the mid-twentieth century are questions of photography. Other areas of research regarding architectural photography in the postwar period include the role of photography in the debate and construction of postwar schools (perhaps the second most pressing reconstruction task, after housing).²³⁹ Another valuable avenue of further investigation would be the position of photography in the task of reconstruction *à la identique*, as opposed to *à la table rase*, since the reconstruction of historic monuments 'as they were' was also an important part of the various national projects of recovery.²⁴⁰ Equally rewarding would be a more detailed excavation of early critiques of postwar reconstruction architecture, the mobilisation of photography as a tool of critique, and visibility as a topic of concern.²⁴¹ Postwar architectural debate was a complex and dynamic tessellation of different approaches to or ways of valuing urban pasts and futures, and of approaching the interactive challenges of planning and building – from the MRU advocating modernist planning and regional style, to the *Review's* promotion of modernist architecture within a framework of picturesque planning, and the stage-managed image wars of Stalinallee and Interbau in the theatre of divided Berlin. The role of photography in many other aspects of postwar

²³⁹ Like housing, education was a topic of considerable cross-cultural exchange as exemplified by Alfred Roth, *The New School / Das Neue Schulhaus / La Nouvelle École* (Zurich: Girsberger, 1950). A trilingual book, it is heavily illustrated with photographs and examines the relation between questions of pedagogy and contemporary buildings. The question of representations of children will be discussed in chapter five.

²⁴⁰ (Crane, 296–319 (p. 235)). Aerial, ruin and architectural photography are all relevant to the postwar rebuilding of historic monuments following a number of recording initiatives, like that in Britain mentioned in chapter one. The Aerial Photography Archive of German Cities held by the Bildarchiv Foto Marburg contains images commissioned by Albert Speer between 1943 and 1945 following the establishment of the reconstruction task force.

²⁴¹ See Alfred Sauvy, *Cité ou termitière?* (Paris: Delpire, 1964); Wolf Siedler and Elisabeth Niggemeyer, *Die gemordete Stadt: Abgesang auf Putte und Straße, Platz und Baum* (Berlin: Herbig, 1964); Jane Jacobs, *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*. (New York: Random House, 1961); Ian Nairn, *Counter-attack Against Subtopia* (London: Architectural Press, 1957).

architectural debate certainly warrants further investigation including how movements like postwar neo-Romanticism articulated with or challenged the promotion of the International Style. However, priority has been given here to the centrality of architectural photography to public debate about the housing question, because of the scale of the impact high-rise construction had in the postwar urban centres. Architectural photography dominated postwar debate about housing, just as the construction of housing came to dominate postwar urban development. The transplantation of ideas like Le Corbusier's radiant city concept or CIAM's functional city campaign from the drawing board pre-1945 to the postwar moment of 'opportunity' impacted not simply on what the International Style became (a quasi-universal preoccupation with the image of architecture), but on what towns and cities became. In essence, monumentality (building as image) overtook rationality (the house as a machine for living). The propagandistic use of architectural photography was part of the cultural conditions of the 1960s commitment to the tower block and thus fundamental to what Hobsbawm termed, 'the most disastrous decade in the history of human urbanization'.²⁴²

Morton Shand tackled the relation between photography and architecture in *The Architectural Review* in 1934, when he asked: 'Did modern photography beget modern architecture, or the converse? It is an interesting point. But since their logical development was simultaneous, and their interaction considerable, it hardly matters which. What does matter is that it was the same sort of mind and power of vision which has produced both; and that both are based on abstract form'.²⁴³ This may have been an accurate description of a mutually enforcing relation in 1934. Two decades later, architectural photography had come to dominate architectural discourse and practice. In *The Production of Space* (1974), Henri Lefebvre addressed the role of the image in promoting abstraction over the sustained consideration of space as a social, lived phenomenon, writing that 'the tasks that still await the history of space proper [...] are] to show up the growing ascendancy of the abstract and the visual, as well as the internal connection between them; and to expose the genesis and meaning of the "logic of the visual"'.²⁴⁴ Negotiating the debates about modernist *tabula rasa* and esoteric townscape, of monumentality and domesticity, of functionalism and regionalism, addressing the different national narratives and drawing out the cross-national cultural

²⁴² Hobsbawm, p. 262.

²⁴³ P. Morton Shand, 'New Eyes for Old', *Architectural Review*, 446 (1934), 11-12.

²⁴⁴ Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1991), p. 138.

exchange which architectural debate consisted in, this chapter has contributed to this history. It has examined the manner in which photography dominated the debate and practice regarding the construction of mass housing in the postwar period, exerting a visual logic which privileged the design of abstract geometric exteriors for viewing over the creation of interior domestic spaces for inhabitation.

Architectural photography may deal in surfaces, collapsing urban space onto the plane of the image. But the manner in which the agency of a cross-nationally circulating photography influences architecture is in no way superficial. It concerns not the creation of buildings that look alike, but the promotion of ways of seeing and thinking about architecture and urban space that make visuality the primary concern of constructing buildings. Thus, a new analytical category is demanded by a nuanced interpretation of the relation between architecture and photography of the postwar period. In addition to architectural photography, we might talk about *photographic architecture* – that is, architecture heavily enmeshed in the practice of photographic representation, responding to it and produced with it in mind.²⁴⁵ This ascription takes seriously the joke made before the war by the Slade Professor of Fine Art, H. S. Goodhart-Rendel, when he quipped, ‘The modern architectural drawing is interesting, the photograph is magnificent, the building is an unfortunate but necessary stage between the two’.²⁴⁶ Photographic architecture is not simply photogenic building, but architecture which springs from a discourse and tradition thoroughly penetrated by photographic representation. Postwar mass housing – a confluence of a utopian discourse on urban redevelopment and a utilitarian response to the postwar housing crisis – is a prime example of photographic architecture. Through photography, the housing problem was reframed as a question of the aesthetics of urban space, rather than the design of domestic space. In the powerful image of the tower block, the external and the visual were privileged over the internal and the haptic.

²⁴⁵ Zimmerman has used the term ‘photographic architecture’ in relation to the work of Mies van der Rohe. Claire Zimmerman, ‘Photographic Modern Architecture: Inside ‘the New Deep’’, *Journal of Architecture*, 9 (2004), 331–354. An explicit definition of the term is not given by Zimmerman, but perhaps her description of the Smithson’s Hunstanton school comes closest to the meaning implied above: ‘It was derived from images, it would be read from images, it had the programmatic clarity of images incorporated into its very structure’ (Zimmerman, pp. 203–28 (p. 221)).

²⁴⁶ Quoted in “‘Bliss Was it in That Dawn to Be Alive’: An Interview with John Brandon-Jones”, *Architectural Design*, 10-11 (1979) p. 98; cited by Elwall, p. 9.

As evident from chapter two, divergent regional experiences of war were mediated through ruin imagery in the three comparator nations and thus made adequate to various national needs in the moment of recovery and reconciliation. This chapter has traced how ruin imagery was also threaded through the powerful discursive formations in which architectural photography circulated, and how both helped shape ways of thinking about and viewing the task of reconstruction. In the architectural debate of the postwar moment, differences between the three comparator nations regarding wartime experience of urban destruction (and, what is more, the memory of recent antagonism and conflict between nations) were, to an extent, negotiated through the common and repeated experience of viewing the ruins of the past and the monumental new structures of the future city – just as regional differences of experiences had been negotiated through the nationalisation of ruins in certain photobooks of the first postwar years. Thus, overlapping with a process of nationalisation of the ruins in individual nations was a process – continuing from the interwar period and catalysed by the reconstruction challenge – of an internationalisation of modernist architecture as *the* style for building the cities of tomorrow. The particular significance of the ruins within a given nation was not necessarily overwritten, in other words, but facilitated and nourished the promotion of a positive image of modernist architecture – a phenomenon which in turn was common to all the three comparator nations.

The following chapter will consider the diversity of urban photographs which circulated in the illustrated press in the early 1950s. Examining images of urban festivities, of fashion, and of street life, it will address a range of visual pleasures offered by photo-magazines, expanding on the discussion of the comparable pleasures offered by architectural guidebooks like Müller-Rehm's *Wohnbauten von Heute*. The following chapter will also excavate the promotion of amateur photography. As in postwar architectural debate, urban photographs circulating cross-nationally through the illustrated press exhibited a collapsing of the distinction between images *of* cities and cities *as* images. In a period of bi-polar global divisions, an increasingly shared visual culture between the three comparator countries – constituted in part by widely circulating city images of London, Paris and Berlin – contributed to a compelling notion of a Western European identity.

Chapter 4: Everyday Faces and Spectacular Spaces: Photographic Pleasures in the Illustrated Press, 1949-55

I thought I made it clear in my own writing on the subject that the photojournalism experiment was on its last legs by 1955.

John Szarkowski¹

Reports of the death of photojournalism are often repeated and almost always exaggerated. Invariably, what is being mourned in such reports is not the cessation of photojournalism as such, but the assumed passing of a progressive agenda or the decline of a particular aesthetic. Stuart Hall considered *Picture Post* to be in terminal decline after 1950.² Klaus Honnef has charged *Quick*, *Neue Illustrierte* and other postwar German magazines with being 'rather pedestrian even narrow-minded'.³ Peter Hamilton pinpointed the early 1950s as the start of the decline of the humanist paradigm in French photojournalism featured in magazines like *Paris-Match* and *Point de vue – Images du monde*.⁴ Richard Vinen has gone further than all these obituarists, commenting on the work of the Magnum photography agency and suggesting that the highpoint of photojournalism in Europe lasted a mere eleven years.⁵ In contrast, this chapter will argue that photography in the illustrated press fulfilled a vital function in postwar recovery during the period of reconstruction in Western Europe. It considers

¹ From a letter to the editors, cited in *Things As They Are: Photojournalism in Context Since 1955*, ed. by Mary Panzer and Christian Caujolle (London: Chris Boot, 2005), p. 9.

² Stuart Hall, 'The Social Eye of Picture Post', *Working Papers in Cultural Studies*, 2 (1972), 71–120.

³ Klaus Honnef, 'From Reality to Art: Photography Between Profession and Abstraction', in *German Photography 1870-1970: Power of a Medium*, ed. by Klaus Honnef, Rolf Sachsse and Karin Thomas (Cologne: DuMont, 1997), p. 141.

⁴ Peter Hamilton, 'Representing the Social: France and Frenchness in Post-war Humanist Photography', in *Representation: Cultural Representations and Signifying Practices*, ed. by Stuart Hall (London: SAGE Publications, 1997), pp. 75–150 (p. 143).

⁵ Vinen posits both that, 'The Spanish Civil War was the midwife of photojournalism' and that 'Magnum's foundation marked an end rather than a beginning. Magnum photographers, especially Capa, were mainly war specialists, and after 1945 they found little to interest them in Europe, where there were few overtly violent conflicts (indeed, Magnum photographs probably contributed to the notion that European history really came to an end in 1945)' (Vinen, pp. 268 & 262).

the popular photographic press of the early 1950s and – analysing some of the most widely published weekly and fortnightly photographic magazines of postwar Britain, France and West Germany – excavates the representation of urban space to demonstrate how such publications projected the notion of a Western European identity. Far from being on its last legs, photography in the postwar illustrated press helped reshape the meaning of urban space in the aftermath of destruction, thus negotiating the memory of the Second World War and fashioning new imagined communities reflecting Cold War divisions.

Examples of postwar magazine covers from the three comparator countries (figs. 4.1 to 4.6) might suggest a simple model of a format imported from the United States to postwar Europe, given how closely the red-and-white logos of *Paris-Match*, *Quick* and *Picture Post* resemble the banner of the internationally successful *Life* magazine, established in 1936. However, such superficial similarities between publications from different nations should not be mistaken for straight-forward emulation. The history of the illustrated press is a complex and international one. The creation of the illustrated press has a long pre-history prior to a boom in Weimar Germany and spreading from there through emigration, and the dissemination of technologies and publishing practices, following the Nazi rise to power.⁶ Crucially, the format was also mobilised during the wartime battles of information, misinformation and morale. The threads which link, say, *Vu* in interwar France or the *Arbeiter Illustrierte Zeitung* in Weimar Germany, and *Life* or *Signal* during the war (the latter being published by the German Wehrmacht for occupied territories), to the postwar editions of *Picture Post* or the US-sponsored postwar weekly, *Heute*, are various and entangled. Teasing them out, however, is not the purpose of this chapter. Analysis here will focus on interpreting how the images on the page worked to position their viewers in relation to the scenes and themes depicted; specifically how the urban photography related to broader geo-political developments.

There was a dramatic decline in income at *Picture Post* which led to its closure by owner Edward Hulton in 1957.⁷ The future of *Paris-Match* was uncertain at the end of 1949, its first year of publishing, with owner Jean Prouvost losing around five times

⁶ For a richly illustrated history of such publications see, *Kiosk: Eine Geschichte der Fotoreportage, 1839-1973*, ed. by Bodo von Dewitz and Robert Lebeck (Göttingen: Steidl, 2001).

⁷ *Picture Post, 1938-50*, ed. by Tom Hopkinson (London: Chatto and Windus, 1984), pp. 20–21.

as much as anticipated before finally breaking even the following year.⁸ But it is inaccurate on the basis of such examples to claim that the illustrated press in this period was obsolete. Individual publications folded and opened, but photographic magazines maintained a significant readership. In the early 1950s, illustrated magazines in West Germany had the largest collective print-run of any part of the press, with a total circulation of over 5 million.⁹ *Paris-Match* regularly printed a million copies, as did the popular weekly illustrated magazines of the UK.¹⁰ Moreover, as noted in the report of the Royal Commission on the Press in 1949, 'These circulation figures of course give no indication of the number of people who read the publications. Even a newspaper which is out of date in a matter of hours is normally read by more than one person; and a periodical, which, with a life of a week or more, passes from hand to hand in homes and clubs and waiting rooms, has a correspondingly higher readership.'¹¹ In this moment prior to the establishment of large television audiences, these publications remained a significant cultural force. This may have been a moment – as the obituarists' comments imply – in which commercialism began to cast a greater shadow over the pages of such publications than any social democratic ideals are presumed to have done in the immediate postwar years.¹² But it is no less important to consider the cultural history of these photographic magazines because of that. The early 1950s was a moment of transition for photography in the illustrated press, not of obsolescence. This transition may have entailed a shift from some perceived immediate postwar high-point (whether characterised on aesthetic or ideological grounds) to an era of greater commercialisation, but like all transitions, it had a destination as well as a point of departure. That destination was a new sense of a

⁸ Nicholas Hewitt, 'The Birth of the Glossy Magazines: The Case of Paris-Match', in *France and the Mass Media*, ed. by Brian Rigby and Nicholas Hewitt (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 1991), pp. 111–128 (pp. 118–119).

⁹ (*Germany Today*, p. 200). Quick, for instance, sold 718,900 copies in 1954 and Neue Illustrierte 545,100.

¹⁰ Hamilton, pp. 75–150 (p. 92); *Royal Commission on the Press, 1947-1949: Report* (London: HMSO, 1949), p. 14.

¹¹ Royal Commission on the Press, 1947-1949 *Royal Commission on the Press, 1947-1949*, p. 14.

¹² On the social democratic ideals of *Picture Post*, see Paul Rennie, 'Socialvision: Visual Culture and Social Democracy in Britain During World War II', *Journal of War & Culture Studies*, 1 (2008), 243–259. Rather than a tidy narrative of upholding democratic ideals, followed by a terminal decline into commercialism, a more accurate characterisation of the history of the illustrated press must address the persistent tension between political instrumentalisation and the commercial imperative. From the publication of the first newspaper carrying an engraving to the latest edition of *TIME* magazine, idealism (of whatever political hue) and commercialism have consistently been the forces which shape the illustrated press and the perspectives it offers consumers.

Western European identity and the part played by photographic magazines in its construction is the central focus of this chapter.

These popular publications intervened in a number of the significant debates and discourses of the period of reconstruction and recovery, making them central to this comparative study of postwar photography and its relation to thinking about urban space. It would be hard to overstate the extent to which the emergence of a credible Western European cultural identity and the divisions of the Cold War are inextricably linked. The Truman doctrine regarding the containment of communism, articulated in March 1947; the programme of US aid known as the European Recovery Programme or Marshall Plan which began in 1947; the currency reform in the west German occupied zones which took place in June 1948; the subsequent blockade of Berlin and airlift which lasted from June 1948 to May of the following year; the merger of the American, French and British zones of occupied Germany to form the Bundesrepublik in May 1949; the founding of the Deutsche Demokratische Republik in October of the same year; the Schuman declaration in May 1950 which led the way to the establishment of the European Coal and Steel Community by the Treaty of Paris in April 1951; the Treaty of Rome signed in March 1957 and the subsequent establishment of the European Economic Community (EEC) – these events and others constitute the important geopolitical backdrop to the reconstruction of Western European cities in the postwar period. The photographic representation of London, Berlin and Paris – as well as images of everyday urban life in other cities – was nowhere generated or circulated in such volume during the period than in the illustrated press. These cities were important symbols in the establishment of broad transnational political communities and cultural identities and the illustrated press had its part to play in shaping and promoting such iconic representations of these cities.

Comparable with the International Style which took shape in the interwar period but took hold in the postwar period, the photographic weeklies of the early 1950s were not a novel or innovative cultural form. Yet, the considerable effort in terms of photographic production in the early 1950s – which saw dozens of magazine titles, hundreds of printed pages and thousands of photographs hit the newsstands every week – represents an important object of study because of the functions these urban images fulfil in relation to two contemporaneous phenomena: firstly, the coming to fruition of a number of postwar initiatives to consolidate peace through strategies of European co-operation or integration; and secondly, the increasing polarisation or

entrenchment between east and west resulting from the Cold War. In other words, these magazines and their representations of urban space are important not because they are new forms of cultural mediation, but because they mediate the emergence of novel forms of identity – the notion of a community of Western European people.¹³

The cover of the first issue of *Paris-Match* (fig. 4.7) pictures with great economy some of the important tensions which shaped the social, political and cultural life of the early 1950s in the three countries.¹⁴ It depicts the Berlin Airlift, highlighting the central role of that city as a frontline in the bi-polar conflict of the Cold War. It includes Winston Churchill, who – the caption explains – has been talking about the foundation of Europe. It also features an American publisher surveying a stand of French literature and a young woman drinking a cocktail. In suggesting a set of relations between not only Britain, France and West Germany, but also the fields of politics, culture and everyday life, this matrix of images offers an apposite framework in which the photographic magazine should be understood. In the period between 1949 and 1955, the idea of Western Europe was of vital importance not only at the level of international conflict or national treaties, but also at the everyday level of popular culture and the individual's sense of community into which they were interpellated by that culture. The uncaptioned photograph of the young woman – the staple cover image of the illustrated magazine, then as now – underscores the importance of visibility within this framework of concerns connecting the comparator countries. While her gaze appears to be directed at some unseen interlocutor, her image (an image of youth, leisure and femininity) is offered to viewers of the magazine for their consumption and entertainment.¹⁵ The sorts of gratification offered by such publications to their consumers are an integral part of the cultural history of postwar reconstruction in Western Europe. As already discussed regarding ruin photobooks and architectural photography, the visual culture of the postwar moment helped shape particular ways of looking at and thinking about towns and cities, addressing memories of wartime death and destruction as well as hopes for the future. Likewise, the various forms of potential

¹³ This imagined community of Western Europe was not novel in the sense of being a postwar invention, but in the scale of its uptake. In the postwar moment, it shifted from being an idea valued by particular historians, philosophers or politicians, to a sense of community or identity with a much broader currency.

¹⁴ *Paris-Match*, 25 March 1949.

¹⁵ Indeed, all the photographs depict an act of looking: the boys of Berlin watch the aeroplanes; Churchill shields his face from the camera's gaze; the American peruses a display. Likewise, each image is offered to the viewer for their consumption as something visually interesting or worth seeing.

pleasure the urban photography in the postwar illustrated press offered acted as a means to recruit audiences to particular ways of seeing and conceiving urban space. Nationally significant ruin imagery, along with other modes of photographic representation, nourished the promotion of the tower block as a solution to the postwar housing crisis in all three comparator nations. As well as being a vital aspect of the cultural conditions of possibility of the high-rise housing boom, urban photographic imagery also aided the presentation of urban space and urban experience as a common phenomenon or shared ground of everyday life in the three comparator nations. Again, urban photographs do not simply reflect attitudes to urban space; they were instrumental in their creation and promotion.

Considering the aftermath of the Second World War in Europe, Frank Biess has discussed the question of emotion and 'emotional communities' in the postwar period. Biess drew on the terminology of Barbara Rosenwein who contends:

People lived – and live – in what I propose to call “emotional communities.” These are precisely the same as social communities – families, neighborhoods [sic.], parliaments, guilds, monasteries, parish church memberships – but the researcher looking at them seeks above all to uncover systems of feeling: what these communities (and the individuals within them) define and assess as valuable or harmful to them; the evaluations that they make about others' emotions; the nature of the affective bonds between people that they recognize; and the modes of emotional expression that they expect, encourage, tolerate, and deplore.¹⁶

The pleasures offered to the viewers of urban photography in postwar photo-magazines worked to constitute precisely such emotional communities. Biess argues that 'one of the central processes of the postwar period' was 'the renewed (re)nationalization and (re)ethnicization of postwar European societies'.¹⁷ Undoubtedly, national reconciliation and national re-invention were key preoccupations of the postwar years – as the comparative analysis of chapter two and the consideration of

¹⁶ Barbara H. Rosenwein, 'Worrying About Emotions in History', *American Historical Review*, 107 (2002), 821–845 (p. 842).

¹⁷ Frank Biess, 'Feelings in the Aftermath: Toward a History of Postwar Emotions', in *Histories of the Aftermath: The Legacies of the Second World War in Europe*, ed. by Frank Biess and Robert G. Moeller (Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2010), pp. 30–48 (p. 41).

cultural exchange in chapter three have examined. This was not the only focus or locus of emotional communities, however. Additionally, in the period marked by both the aftermath of the Second World War and the tensions of the Cold War, a transnational ideal was also pursued. It is worth noting from the outset that this was not an 'either' / 'or' opposition in which national identity was suppressed or sublimated in the pursuit of other forms of community. In his economic and political history of the period, Alan Milward argued that the pursuit of transnational cooperation was a factor in sustaining or supporting the continued existence of the nation state following the destructive war.¹⁸ Likewise, in the field of culture, the national and the transnational co-existed.

This chapter will examine the question of emotional communities as regards the idea of Western Europe, arguing that a central tenet of emerging notions of transnational identity was the representation of the constituent nations' cities and their citizens. Geographically-specific urban imagery (be it of fashion models on Paris streets or those struggling to subsist in the divided city of Berlin) was co-opted into an invitation addressed to audiences of the photographic press to identify with the notion of a Western European cultural identity. Thus, co-existing with the nationalisation of local ruin imagery and the photographic promotion of an internationalised image of modernist architecture was the promotion of a transnational imagined community cultivated by the circulation across national borders of urban imagery in a range of photographic discourses including even the promotion of amateur photography. Promoting a cultural climate in which difference between the three comparator nations was plausibly subsumed in a wider picture of commonality, the illustrated press was a site at which the national and transnational associations of urban space were renegotiated. In effect, the representational strategies of the photographic magazines worked to overwrite urban memories of wartime death and destruction and reframe urban space as an aspirational space of postwar potential; urban imagery in these publications invited audiences to identify the postwar with a positive sense of connectedness or cohesion.

What Julian Stallabrass has said of street photography in Paris – 'The city helped form this genre of photography and, equally, photography contributed to the formation of the city'¹⁹ – is equally true of urban photography in Berlin and London from the early 1950s. Photography was practised in these cities, reproduced in the

¹⁸ Alan S. Milward, *The European Rescue of the Nation-State* (Abingdon: Routledge, 1992).

¹⁹ *Paris Pictured*, ed. by Julia Stallabrass (London: Royal Academy of Arts, 2002), n.pag.

photographic magazines and, by turn, these photographs were instrumental in forming and promoting a particular image of these cities. In discussing the creation of a 'city image' in the following analysis, what is being referred to is the discursive construction of the city as an imagined space; a space which through representation comes to symbolise a set of ideas and values. What follows will provide an interpretation of the illustrated press which excavates the discursive formations in which urban photographs circulated in the early 1950s, explains their functioning in creating a city image (say, of Berlin, London or Paris), and highlights the relation of this image to broader questions of emotional and transnational community. The image of the city is not then simply a set of photographs, but a way of looking at and thinking about urban space – an identity and a significance conferred on a particular urban centre and negotiated through photographs, and their accompanying text and captions. These city images exist in a dynamic relation with their own past (immediate and distant) and in relation to one another. The reprinting of pictures of the liberation in one issue of *Paris-Match* and a photo-story on Hyde Park in the next, for instance, are accretions which contribute to creating the shared images of Paris and of London which circulated in France in the early 1950s. Moreover, the image of a given city, through the visual pleasures such representations offered viewers, were a means of forging emotional communities.²⁰

Being the product of innumerable contributors, these magazines host various intersecting modes of photography. It is in recognition of this diversity that 'city images' will be addressed here, as opposed to more familiar terms associated with the photographic press, such as street photography, reportage or photojournalism. The photography of cities which featured on the pages of these magazines was much more diverse or heterogeneous than such terms suggest, including fashion, news, advertising and others sorts of images. This material may be familiar – if not the individual images, then at least the style of photography and publication. However, this familiarity does not go hand in hand with an adequate understanding of the functions performed by such images at the time of their original circulation. In fact, the recirculation of these images in hagiographic coffee table books, in so-called pictorial histories, and even as illustrations largely uncommented on in the centre pages of

²⁰ This notion of a 'city image' as an abstract concept or mental representation draws on W. J. T. Mitchell's examination of the visual and verbal components of images: 'Images [...] are both verbal and visual entities, both metaphors and graphic symbols. They are, at one and the same time, concepts, objects, pictures, and symbolic forms. Some of them become operative forces in sociopolitical reality, attaining what is commonly known as "iconic" status – widely recognizable, and provocative of powerful emotions' (Mitchell, *Cloning Terror*, p. xvii).

scholarly monographs, does much to obscure such an understanding.²¹ Despite or indeed because of its familiarity, this material needs revisiting in the context of this wider study of the visual culture of reconstruction and postwar thinking about urban spaces. Today such images appear in isolation – whether in a Willy Ronis exhibition, Bert Hardy's illustrated memoir, or the memory of individuals. Originally, they existed (and thus acquired the significance they retain traces of today) in a dynamic relation with other images of other nations – other faces, other places. Only by considering the manner in which these various uses and styles of photography interact between the covers of weekly or fortnightly issues, is it possible to address the way particular visual pleasures worked to recruit viewers to particular ways of viewing and thinking about specific urban centres.

The first section analyses the representation of the wealth of public ceremonies that were staged in urban centres, considering photography of such spectacles with particular focus on London, the Festival of Britain and the Coronation of Elizabeth II. The second section addresses the co-constitutive construction of the image of key cities in the illustrated press, using the example of the manner in which the image of Paris is promoted or contested through fashion photography with reference to other cities. The third section examines representations of the divided Germany, focusing in particular on the image of Berlin. It will consider the manner in which various invitations to identify or deny identification with human figures through photography relate to questions of broader European identity or imagined community. The fourth section looks at the images offered to viewers of city spaces transformed into objects of wonder by the gaze of the camera and the poetic allusions of the caption. It concerns the manner in which magazine audiences were not simply offered a weekly or fortnightly parade of urban spectacles, but actively encouraged to partake in photographing everyday life as a leisure activity.

Examining pageantry and urban spectacles, glamour and fashion photography, and images of both the human face and the face of the city, this chapter will excavate the visual pleasures of escapism, voyeurism, identification and participation which were offered to consumers of photo-magazines in the three comparator countries in the early 1950s. It will highlight the importance of urban space and visibility in the discursive construction of a notion of Western European identity. In doing so, it will address the

²¹ For instance, the trilingual series published by Könemann for Getty Images titled, 'Decades of the 20th century / Dekaden des 20. Jahrhunderts / décennies du XXe siècle'.

deficiencies of recent postwar reconstruction historiography outlined in chapter one, offering a transnational historical perspective on the illustrated press, a formative cultural practice which like other ephemera is too often overlooked. It will be argued that the representation of urban space in the most popular photo-magazines of the three nations worked to overwrite the city as a vehicle for memory of the war, asserting other symbolic values through postwar city images; that magazine audiences were recruited to a community of urban spectators through the pleasures offered by the illustrated press; and that urban photography contributed to the discursive formation of a notion of Western European-ness through the cross-national circulation of city images.

4.1 *Pageantry, Celebration and Spectacle: Escapism in London*

Given the extent of the austerity in Britain exemplified by continued rationing, say, or the continuing impact of the destruction and privation brought about in West Germany by the bombing war, a surprising array of fêtes, festivals, carnivals and public ceremonies grace the pages of the photographic press in the early 1950s. Perhaps on reflection it should not be at all surprising. Such photo-stories offered qualities all too absent from everyday life at the time – pageantry, levity and celebration. Indeed, coverage of the carnival in Cologne in *Neue Illustrierte* (fig. 4.1.1) drew exactly this comparison between the legacy of the war and the escapism of the festivities. An article titled “Fastelovend” is undefeatable’ contrasts images of two locales of Cologne.²² Firstly, an image of the Komödinstraße and Andreaskloster from March 1945 shows American soldiers amongst the rubble and a caption notes the war’s devastating toll on buildings and inhabitants. An image of the same location in 1949 shows the celebration parade and the caption introduces the Ehrengarde, one of the town’s carnival societies. Likewise, an image of the celebrations of the last masked ball in 1939 in the Güzernich hall is contrasted with a photograph depicting the ruins of the hall along with those of St Alban’s church.²³ The image of the postwar ruins bares a caption that remarks on the community effort to clear the rubble which took place the previous year. These pairings – which preceded a further two pages covering the celebrations – illustrate the manner in which, at the start of the 1950s, both urban culture (the carnival) and visual culture (the illustrated press) were very much defined in reaction to the war and the legacy of the destruction of urban space and the images of this destruction. This pattern is repeated across all three comparator nations in this period. The photography of urban space in the illustrated press of the early 1950s is

²² (“Fastelovend” ist unbesiegbare!, *Neue Illustrierte*, 16 February 1950, p. 3). ‘Fastelovend’ (=Fastabend in Cologne dialect) originally referred to the day before the start of Lent (ie. Shrove Tuesday), but like the term Mardi Gras it now stands for the whole of the carnival.

²³ These two adjacent buildings were extensively damaged by bombing in March 1945. The ministry decided not to reconstruct the building owing to a diminished number of parishioners. It was declared a memorial in 1959. A copy of Käthe Kollwitz’s sculpture of grieving parents stands in the ruined courtyard. The sculpture was originally conceived and created for the Germany military cemetery in Vladslo, Belgium, after the First World War. Kollwitz’s son was killed in action in Belgium. A new modernist church, Neu St Alban, was built north-east of the city centre in 1957. The Güzernich was rebuilt between 1952 and 1955. Designed by Rudolf Schwarz and Josef Bernard, the hall combines extant elements of the fifteenth century building with additional modernist elements (including a foyer and staircase which provides a view over the Alt St Alban memorial).

still, five years after war's end, inextricably connected to the question of urban destruction and its representation.

Urban spaces were repeatedly pictured as the setting for public festivities. These events, like the carnival of Cologne, sought to emphasise (or even enact) community cohesion and provided ample material to furnish the picture editors of the illustrated press with positive images and features. For instance, coverage of the carnival in *Neue Illustrierte* expanded year on year, occupying the colour cover and twelve pages of photographs by 1955. Rosemary Wakeman has provided a detailed account of the wealth of commemorations and celebrations in the city of Paris which began immediately following the liberation of the city in 1944 and continued well into the mid-1950s. Even in Paris, which had not suffered from extensive bombing, it is important to recognise, as Wakeman terms it, that 'the meanness of life extended far beyond the war years'.²⁴ Rationing on key food stuffs, for instance, continued in France until 1949. In appropriating urban spaces, public events fulfilled a three-fold need: they reclaimed the streets from the legacy of the war (be that occupation or curfews imposed by bombing raids), providing an opportunity for the people to occupy this space and in doing so claim ownership of it; they also constituted an escape from the hardships of everyday life in a still recovering continent; and they were a means by which to forge a sense of community through the act of collective celebration. One principal Parisian event – mixing, as the Cologne carnival did, sanctioned escapism from the everyday postwar situation and the invocation of an historic tradition – was the Bi-millénaire or 'le Bi'. It marked the 2000th anniversary of the founding of Paris. Lasting from the summer to December, the main event was on 8 July 1951. Events like this, as Wakeman asserts, 'attempted to invent urban citizenship and a sense of unity around emotionally compelling representations of Paris and its history'.²⁵ The pleasure offered by such events was a form of escapism – both an escape from the war's memory, and an escape from the privations that were its legacy.

The photographs in the illustrated press mediated such events, disseminating both the image of the city they promoted and the pleasures they offered. *Paris-Match* in July 1951 featured pictures of the capital's iconic architecture captured at twilight by

²⁴ Rosemary Wakeman, *The Heroic City: Paris, 1945-1958* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009), p. 44.

²⁵ Wakeman, p. 36.

Izis [Israëlis Bidermanas] (figs. 4.1.2 and 4.1.3).²⁶ The captions to Izis' photos note the transformative capacity of night-time and colour photography, explaining the technical achievement of the effects.²⁷ These images which are the cover and centre pages of this special edition, depict the capital through its monuments, both state-sponsored (the Arc de Triomphe) and commercial (the Moulin Rouge). The city here is an historic and an aesthetic artefact made available to the audience of the illustrated magazine and offered as a source of visual entertainment. Through the choice of night-time photography and long exposures, traces of everyday life are removed completely or transformed into aesthetic blurs. These images marry the historic monuments of Paris which evoke its past, with an indication of its modern present and future through the technology of colour photography. Colour film and colour reproduction only became economically viable in the 1950s. Through its novelty, the city photographed in colour offered a transformed image of urban space distinct from the more familiar black and white representations. In doing so, Izis' images also excised the ignominy of the occupation and the privation of the postwar moment from the visual record, leaving only an aestheticised past (realised in the content of the images) and a technological modern future (implied by the medium of colour photography). The use of night-time photography, colour photography or both was a recurrent strategy in the urban representations that accompanied these celebrations or city pageants. The city at night becomes a far more pliant symbol, its bombsites or its poorer inhabitants obscured.

In the summer of 1951, London was celebrating too. Commemorating the Festival of Britain, the centre pages of a magazine-format souvenir publication by the British newspaper *News Chronicle*, depicted London at night (figs. 4.1.4 and 4.1.5).²⁸ As in Izis' photographs for *le Bi*, here any blemishes are hidden. The illuminated historic monuments knit the new, modernist structures of the South Bank into the London townscape. The main Festival of Britain site, located on a 27 acre site on the capital's South Bank, opened on 3 May 1951. The London-based press devoted many pages to urban questions in relation to the Festival. While described as a festival of Britain, two of its main sites were on the Thames and much of the coverage from the

²⁶ 'Les nuits de Paris ont 2000 ans', *Paris-Match*, 28 July 1951, pp. 16-23.

²⁷ 'It is the exposure time that transforms the cars into white or red lines depending on whether they come towards the lens or away from it' ('C'est le temps de pose qui transforme les autos en lignes blanches ou rouges selon qu'elles viennent vers l'objectif ou s'en éloignent'), ('Les nuits de Paris ont 2000 ans', p. 22).

²⁸ *Festival of Britain: Souvenir in Pictures* (London: News Chronicle, 1951).

magazines – which, like those in France, were principally based in the capital²⁹ – focused on London and its image. For instance, the commemorative issue of *Picture Post* was a portrait of the Festival city, titled ‘All London’.³⁰ *Illustrated* ran a series titled ‘In Search of London’, with text by the journalist and travel writer H. V. Morton, and photographs by Henri Cartier-Bresson. The series began with a photo-story on an iconic building (St Paul’s³¹) and included a piece titled ‘The City Has Two Faces’ in which direct comparison is drawn between the city’s iconic sites (the British Museum and Westminster Abbey) and its bomb sites (fig. 4.1.6).³² This feature included an account of the packing up of the British Museum collection and its wartime safe-keeping in the tunnels of Chancery Lane tube station. The text gave an extensive account of historic uses of and events in Westminster, from the Normans and Saxons who hunted in its woods to the lying in state of George V in Westminster Abbey. This emphasis on the *longue durée* was very much a feature of the exhibitions of the South Bank. Its recurrence in media coverage of the Festival is a mark of how successful this idea was. History, given material form through the city’s heritage (both architecture and museum artefacts), is integral to the image of the city, as if the invocation of a sufficiently broad conception of the past would mitigate the privations and hardships of the postwar present. Indeed, here the images juxtaposed on the third page of the article connect the historic city of Athens to London with the caption, ‘Athens ... A Memory Of Remote War: London ... A Reality Of Conflict At Home’ (fig. 4.1.7). This piece exemplifies the dynamic relation that existed between the city’s wartime image and its postwar image – a relation which was played out in the photography of the illustrated press. City-centred photo-stories, through figures like the British Museum, tried to re-imagine or reconfigure the city’s identity and orient it to the future using certain aspects of the past. Becky Conekin has noted that events of the immediate past, ‘most notably the war just ended, were basically absent from the Festival’: ‘the harmonious modernist vision of a future mastered by scientific planning [...] was

²⁹ Wakeman notes that 83% of the publishing and news industry was based in Paris in the 1950s (Wakeman, p. 41). The report from the Royal Commission on the Press, 1949, included the following comment: ‘The publication of periodicals is centralised in London to a greater degree even than newspapers. With the exception of a group of magazines published in Glasgow, Dundee, and Manchester, all the more widely circulated periodicals and magazines of general interest originate in London [...]’ (p. 14). The geographic origin of the major magazines was more diverse in West Germany, being centred around regional hubs like Hamburg, Munich, Cologne and Frankfurt.

³⁰ *Picture Post*, 26 May 1951.

³¹ *Illustrated*, 5 May 1951, pp. 9-15.

³² H. V. Morton, ‘The City has Two Faces’, *Illustrated*, 12 May 1951, pp. 12-15.

produced through the exclusion of the recent past'.³³ This much is true vis-à-vis the exhibitions themselves which took a wide-angle view of British history. However, the coverage in the press was directly connected to the war and its legacy. Both strategies constituted efforts to shape memory of the recent past; the first by omission, the second by reimagining or reorienting the associations of urban space.

Fig. 4.1.8 shows people looking at one of the symbols of the Festival of Britain – the Skylon.³⁴ The opening line of the article claims to report the words of those pictured: “What does it mean?” It is a crucial question which underpins urban photography and its circulation in the postwar moment. The text goes on to outline one important meaning that lurks in postwar urban space when it asserts that the Skylon may, ‘strike them as frightening and upsetting. The fact remains: Britain has just emerged from a destructive war in which skylon-esque V1s and V2s, and superskylon atomic bombs heralded the uneasy aftermath of VE-Day and VJ-Day’.³⁵ This photo-story exemplifies a keenly felt problem of the postwar moment: the task of re-orienting population centres towards the future; finding a way not simply to repair the damage, but also to escape the memory of the war. Time and again people are pictured in the act of looking and deciphering in urban spaces. Importantly, photo-stories such as this stage the question of the meaning of urban space and its structures through visual means and with reference to visibility. It was not simply an idea of these cities that the press promoted; it was a visual construction enabled through photography. It was specifically an *image of the city*. The identity of the city was repeatedly connected to its images, its photographs. Moreover, the audience of the illustrated press were not simply presented with a set of photos. They were invited to look and to partake in a community of other lookers – a community pictured on the page. It is as if in recognition of the shifting significance of urban space and its images that these acts of looking are somewhat obsessively repeated. Richard Bessel and Dirk Schumann describe ‘the

³³ Becky Conekin, *The Autobiography of a Nation: The 1951 Festival of Britain* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2003), pp. 103–4.

³⁴ (‘Any More for the Skylon?’, *Illustrated*, 2 June 1951, pp. 22–23). Architects of Churchill Gardens, Philip Powell and Hidalgo Moya, won the commission for a monument on the South Bank site in January 1950, following a design competition that garnered 157 entries. The competition to name the structure was won by Margaret Sheppard Fidler, wife to chief architect of Crawley new town, with a word alluding to the heralded promise of mass air travel and the futuristic material nylon. The satirical magazine *Punch*, published a cartoon drawing a parallel between the Skylon and the Labour government, both of which were said to have ‘no visible means of support’ (Powell, pp. 32–6).

³⁵ ‘Any More for the Skylon?’, p. 22.

1950s as the post-history of the 1940s'.³⁶ In photo-stories like this can be seen an important aspect of that post-history; of the 1950s as a period of aftermath. In the long process of recovery which followed total war, the task of reconfiguring the view of the city from a wartime to a postwar mentality was keenly felt. The photographic magazines joined with the raft of public celebrations to help facilitate this. The images of war and occupation gave rise to a concerted effort to fashion an image of the postwar cities of Western Europe. Urban visual culture of the early 1950s is intimately connected to the war's visual legacy. It is obsessed with picturing, seeing and looking. Moreover, it brought people together in these acts of deciphering, through the enjoyment and pleasures looking offered – as so perfectly captured in the images of a community of people brought together in the act of looking at the futuristic structures of the South Bank. This was a moment of continuing transition for the significance of urban space from wartime associations to postwar aspirations, and these photographs helped facilitate this transition by inviting magazine audiences to take part in the process of visual negotiation – a communal act of turning towards the future.

The South Bank site received 8,500,000 visitors. However, despite the hopes of its organisers, coverage of the Festival abroad was relatively slight.³⁷ An official advert placed in *Paris-Match* proclaimed that, 'Britain welcomes the world',³⁸ but very little coverage occurred in the French press. On the whole, this seems true of other similar events. Thwarting the aims of those behind these events, the image of such national celebrations and self-representations did not extend far beyond the borders of the country which staged them. Nonetheless, these urban extravaganzas shared the same pursuit – that of refashioning the meaning of urban space and its image. Reorienting

³⁶ Dirk Schumann and Richard Bessel, 'Introduction: Violence, Normality and the Construction of Postwar Europe', in *Life After Death: Approaches to a Cultural and Social History of Europe During the 1940s and 1950s*, ed. by Richard Bessel and Dirk Schumann (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), p. 12.

³⁷ Gerard Barry, editor of *News Chronicle*, proposed the idea of the Festival in 1945 in an open letter to then President of the Board of Trade, Stafford Cripps. He wrote in *Picture Post* that, 'The Festival will demonstrate to those of our friends who have somewhat prematurely wiped us off the world-map, the strength of a nation still determined to play its full part as a virile and adaptable people. [...] It will put on record the fact that we are a nation not only with a great past, but also a great future' (Gerard Barry, 'The Festival is Britain's', *Picture Post*, 6 Jan 1951, pp. 12-20). Deputy Prime Minister and government sponsor of the Festival, Herbert Morrison, wrote in *Illustrated*, 'It's going to be a great affair; a great manifestation of British quality and good cheer. [...] For people who come from overseas it will smash the idea that Britain is slow and stick-in-the-mud. We'll show them a lively, pulsating Britain that is hammering out its problems and forging ahead' (Herbert Morrison, 'Looking Forward: Something to Shout About', *Illustrated*, 2 Dec 1950, pp. 11-14 & 43).

³⁸ 'Chez elle, la Grande-Bretagne recevra le monde', *Paris-Match*, 3 March 1951, p. 14.

audiences from wartime to postwar associations, they all engaged with the crucial question articulated in the photo-story on the Skylon – the meaning of urban space. That the details of festivities like Cologne carnival, ‘le Bi’ or the Festival of Britain did not necessarily travel across borders is perhaps testament to the context in which these debates had meaning. These were charged symbolic undertakings for the specific nations, but were less of a preoccupation for their neighbours. The image of the respective cities and capitals was important and much pictured in the photo-stories of the illustrated press – simply not in relation to these state-sanctioned or municipal public celebrations.³⁹

One public event in London which did garner extensive coverage on the continent – and which helps further explicate the intimate connections between city image, visibility and its photographic representation – was the Coronation of 1953.⁴⁰ While the image of Britain as offered by the Festival was not much circulated in countries across the channel, the photographic magazines more than compensated for this relative lack of interest in pageantry and celebration in Britain’s capital when it came to coverage of the monarchy. *Picture Post* and *Illustrated* each issued a number of special commemorative editions, but so too did *Paris-Match*. *Elizabeth II: Reine d’Angleterre*, included a reproduction of Mason’s photograph of St Paul’s with a caption that commented on the Battle of Britain and the number of houses destroyed. The choice of this image shows again how closely the pageantry of the early 1950s was connected to the events of the war despite the eight years that had elapsed. Despite the deference the caption shows – it talks of the courageous capital and Churchill’s reference to the few owed so much by the many – there is still room for age-old national rivalry. For instance, the caption to the two colour images of the procession in front of Westminster Abbey reads, ‘In cheering their sovereign, it is also themselves

³⁹ Arguably, coverage of West Germany in France and Britain did not always fit this mould. The newly-born state remained a source of interest in France and Britain. A strong set of photographers or a recognised photographer could be sufficient to prompt an exception to the rule, deeming a local or national celebration newsworthy in other countries. One notable exception was the publication in Britain of photographs by Robert Capa of Munich’s Oktoberfest. (‘Munich Goes Around and Around’, *Illustrated*, 21 October 1950, pp. 28-30). This photo-story demonstrates an active negotiation of the past war and present tension through images of celebration. The lead sentence stated, ‘In Germany, East is East and West is West, but at festival time in the autumn all political bad feeling is whirled away on the roundabouts’, while later on the accompanying text asserted, ‘Postwar days have seen the *Oktoberfest* return to its old gaiety after a dark interval. Munich was the birthplace of Nazism. Hitler conspired in its beer-cellars. [...] Many buildings were smashed by Allied bombers in the war, and the painful rebuilding has barely begun. But this year the city for a moment forgot the scars’ (p. 28).

⁴⁰ The continental interest even prompted a brief photo-story in Britain on French souvenir-hunters: ‘It’s Vive le Coronation’, *Illustrated*, 9 May 1953, pp. 37-38.

that the English applaud.’⁴¹ The copywriter, however, raises a point relevant to an understanding of this spectacle and the period. The coronation, and its enjoyment through the photographs circulated in magazines such as these, facilitated the promulgation of a particular image of the nation; of a strong Britain, united through historic traditions.

Coverage of the event by Hanns Hubmann and Hilmar Pabel for the German magazine *Quick* shows various examples of the transformation of urban space. It depicts the pomp and ceremony of the parade itself, describing it repeatedly as a fairytale of our time.⁴² It also shows people coming together to celebrate, a road closed for a children’s party effecting the temporary transformation of the everyday associated with carnivalesque (fig. 4.1.9). Like *Quick*, *Point de vue – Images du Monde* provided extensive coverage of the Coronation for its audience. It had published 15 pages of images regarding the death of King George and, the following year, its coverage of the Coronation filled another 15 pages.⁴³ The images of the Coronation were described on the cover as having been selected from 10,000 pictures. Fig. 4.1.10 is a double-page spread from the *Point de vue* coverage, with the ‘the Queen’ on the verso and ‘the crowd’ on the recto.⁴⁴ The caption exemplifies with great economy the manner of the many representations of fêtes, ceremonies, festivals and carnivals. It shows first and foremost a huge mass of individuals gathered in a public urban space to look at a deliberately conceived and orchestrated spectacle. The crowd have come to see the Queen, to witness the event; it is brought together in the act of witnessing. But step back and consider the original audience of this magazine and another act of spectatorship comes into view. The consumption of the spectacle in the photographic magazines works both to interpellate the magazine reader into the dynamic of the crowd through an alignment of the audience’s vision with that of the crowd – both view the event and the Queen. Moreover, the event becomes defined by its image and the image overtakes the importance of the event itself. Reprinted every week in the many pages of the photographic press, the spectacle (of which the Coronation is just a particularly glamorous and exotic example) is enacted not principally because of the

⁴¹ ‘En acclamant leur souveraine c’est un peut eux-mêmes que les anglais applaudissaient’ (Amy Bellot, René-Jean Ottoni and Maurice Croizard, *Elizabeth II: Reine d’Angleterre* (Paris: Paris-Match, 1953), pp. 100–101).

⁴² ‘Das Märchenwunder unserer Zeit’, *Quick*, 14 June 1953, p. 11.

⁴³ *Point de vue – Images du monde*, 14 February 1952 and 11 June 1953.

⁴⁴ *Point de vue – Images du monde*, 11 June 1953, pp. 10–11.

value or function of a particularly ceremony, but for the purposes of generating its image, the viewing of which is a communal activity. While the Coronation is a unique event, it is ultimately representative of a broader phenomenon of urban spectacle, by turns lavish or quotidian, which formed a large part of the content of the illustrated press in the postwar decade.

This representation of the spectacle of the Coronation highlights the importance of the notion of spectatorship to an analysis of the postwar illustrated press. The event is not simply enjoyed by those present. Through the photograph and the mass distribution of the illustrated press, it becomes an experience witnessed and shared by thousands, even millions. This shared experience is a defining characteristic of the illustrated magazine in this period before the growth in television viewing.⁴⁵ In the photographic magazines, the image of spectacles, like the Coronation, are handled, passed around, shared and discussed. And it is through this social existence that the importance of the illustrated press can be grasped. As Guy Debord asserted in 1967, 'The spectacle is not a collection of images; rather, it is a social relationship between people that is mediated by images.'⁴⁶ The pageantry and escapism of a spectacle like the Coronation, captured and circulated by the illustrated press, becomes a means of constituting a collective through the invitation to be part of the spectacle's audience as visualised in the pages from *Point de vue*. The carnivals, festivals, fetes and other public celebrations and ceremonies were, like the ruin photobooks considered in chapter one, important self-representations which allowed the nations involved to produce an image of themselves and their cities which negotiated the *longue durée*, the immediate past, the difficult present and visions of the future. These self-representations created an image of the city. At the same time, these spectacles and their representation predicated a particular sort of 'spectator-citizen' who – through the act of spectatorship – entered into a social relations with their fellow citizens; a relationship heavily marked by the questions of vision, image and appearance. The

⁴⁵ The Coronation was one of the first mass televised events – a fact which was manifested as anxiety through the vigorous defence of the photograph's capacities in *Point de vue*. The limited commentary given was preoccupied with rebutting any claim that television is a fatal blow to photography, emphasising in the final line that these selected images 'prove one more time that photography is an art form capable of infinite resonance' ('Telles sont les images que nous avons retenues du couronnement et qui prouvent, une fois de plus, que la photographie est un art aux résonances infinies' (11 June 1953, p. 4)). Similarly, coverage in *Quick* referred to the mediatization of spectacles such as this, through an advert for a camera and an article on the television coverage of 'the greatest show on earth' ('Die größte Schau der Welt' (14 June 1953, p. 40)).

⁴⁶ Guy Debord, *The Society of the Spectacle* (New York: Zone Books, 1995), p. 12.

constituency addressed by such spectacular urban imagery was sometimes restricted to a particular nation (as in the case of 'le Bi' or the Festival of Britain). On occasion, it was an event whose image circulated transnationally. Whether such images had resonance abroad or were limited in their mobility across borders, the spectacles they represented posited in all three countries comparable 'spectator-citizens' invited through emotional appeal to identify with a broader community. Instructively, the Coronation was a spectacle the image of which circulated transnationally. Such cultural exchange was formative in the promotion by the illustrated press of emotional communities across national boundaries through the circulation of city images, as will be examined in detail in the next section.

4.2 *Glamour, Leisure and Romance: Voyeurism and Paris*

While various urban spectacles offered viewers of photo-magazines the pleasures of escapism in a time of enduring hardship and privation, they also contributed to the co-constitutive construction of city images. In other words, the image of any particular city was created through a dynamic relation with the image of other cities. Fashion photography is an illustrative example of the cross-national circulation and co-dependency of city images in the popular magazines of the period. Fashion was, and remains, a means to assert the cultural capital of a city. The circulation of fashion images contributes to the discursive creation of a given urban centre as an imagined space associated with particular values and ideas, such as glamour or style, modishness or freshness. Such city images partake in a constant process of assertion and contestation of the meanings which attach to a particular urban centre through verbal and visual representation. British and West German photo-magazines of the postwar period both exhibited deference to Paris as a renowned fashion centre, and asserted the validity of other cities' claims in reaction to the image of chic and glamorous Paris. In turn, representations in the French magazines exhibited a defensive reaction to this contest of city images and the attendant challenge to Paris' status as fashion capital. This clash of images, played out through urban fashion shoots, continued to be marked by the memory of the war and the death and destruction it had caused in the towns and cities of the three nations. Additionally, fashion photography also exemplifies the voyeurism or pleasure of looking on which the photo-magazine format is predicated.

An example from *Illustrated* in 1950 exemplifies the function of fashion photography in creating and sustaining an image of Paris as a chic city, associated with style and glamour.⁴⁷ It includes six photos showcasing coats and hats on the streets of Paris with instantly recognisable landmarks in the background, including the Champs-Élysées, the Eiffel Tower, Notre Dame Cathedral and the Arc de Triomphe. The city in these images is as much a model for the clothes as the model herself; the 'warm look' is as dependent for its attractiveness on the wintry Parisian streets, as it is the qualities of the coat. The idea of Paris as a fashion centre and the image of the latest fashions are thus mutually reinforcing. The garments are stylish as evidenced by their being pictured in the elegant French capital and in playing host to the latest look, Paris'

⁴⁷ 'And Now It's the Warm Look', *Illustrated*, 25 Nov 1950.

fashionable status is confirmed. A piece in *Heute* by fashion photographer Regina Relang is another of many interchangeable examples where the city and the model play equal roles in showcasing the clothes (fig. 4.2.1).⁴⁸ In a typical image, the model stands in front of a newspaper stand laden with French titles. Even if Paris was not itself the physical location of a shoot, it was frequently evoked by name or through a sketch of the Eiffel Tower or another familiar symbol of Parisian street life.

As well as drawing on Paris' reputation to showcase the latest look, the supremacy of the French capital as the centre of fashion was also challenged in the photo-magazines of Britain and West Germany. In the summer of 1951, *Picture Post* suggested, 'Paris dresses British'.⁴⁹ Photographs by Kurt Hutton showed six images of a woman in Paris in dresses by British designers. Here, the image of fashionable Paris bolsters the claims to stylishness of British designers, while the title asserts a challenge to Parisian superiority. Berlin, too, was asserted as a rival (or at least an equal) to Paris. For instance, the *Neue Müncher Illustrierte* published a photo-story titled, 'Chic aus Berlin', appropriating its terminology from French and using it to assert that Berlin, like London, could lay claim to being a fashion centre too.⁵⁰ As well as such largely deferential modes of affiliation or appropriation, established conventions of fashion photography were played with to assert the validity of one city's image as a fashion centre over that of another. A piece in *Illustrated* during the Festival summer mimicked the familiar photographic depiction of fashion in the Parisian townscape. Figs. 4.2.2 and 4.2.3 show pages from a fashion shoot titled, 'Fashion is where you find it'.⁵¹ It depicted a young woman, once more in front of a newsstand, along with drawings of Parisian street life and landmarks. A café scene forms the background for another photograph, along with plane trees, a gendarme, and the river. The question is posed, 'Paris is always like this ... or is it?' Turn to the back pages as instructed, and it is revealed that these images were taken around London. The implication of this simulation is clear: London can do the fashionable look as well as Paris.

Crucially, this playing with conventions demonstrates that the fashionable look is intimately connected with the city image, as the mutually reinforcing image of garment and urban space suggested. In working to assert the stylish credentials of

⁴⁸ 'Paris: Frühjahrskostüme', *Heute*, 11 April 1951, pp. 26-27.

⁴⁹ 'Paris dresses British', *Picture Post*, 18 August 1951, pp. 38-39.

⁵⁰ 'Chic aus Berlin', *Neue Müncher Illustrierte*, 19 May 1951, p. 29.

⁵¹ 'Fashion Is Where You Find It', *Illustrated*, 9 June 1951, pp. 29-31.

London, British photo-magazines engaged with Paris as a visual entity. They appropriated the landmarks and icons of the French capital to effect a transfer of its chic associations to London and construct an image of a modish British capital using recognisable symbols of a shared visual culture. Fashion photography – like the urban spectacles discussed above – was concerned as much with the image of the city as it was with clothing. Moreover, what these pages demonstrate is not simply that the latest look is dependent on the image of the city. By turns, the imagined space of the city becomes inextricably linked to the notion of ‘a look’.

Photo-stories on Berlin fashions likewise sought to appropriate the cachet of Paris. In the spring of 1953, *Weltbild* published eleven images under the title, ‘Let us seduce you ... *Weltbild* takes a little springtime journey to the capitals of fashion’.⁵² The images are grouped under the headings of five different cities: London, New York, Rome, Paris and Berlin. Thus, Berlin is asserted as a fashionable and stylish city through the fashion shoot, on an equal footing with Paris. In the autumn of the same year, the same magazine published a set of images of a model on the streets of Berlin in an array of stylish clothes which facilitate an explanation of how the representational strategies of fashion photography are emblematic of the postwar illustrated press as a whole.⁵³ Photographs show her next to a café and hailing a taxi. Another depicts her walking down the street with the ruined Kaiser Wilhelm Gedächtniskirche behind her, out of focus but clearly visible. Again, as in figs. 4.2.1 and 4.2.2, there is also a photograph of the model in front of a news kiosk, festooned with newspapers and photo-magazines. Such self-referential images fulfilled the double function of advertising and promoting the illustrated press (the glamour of model and garment being transferred to the publications in the background) and emphasising the up-to-the-minute nature of the latest look (the freshness of the latest editions being transferred to the clothing in foreground). In such images is pictured both the co-dependency of the fashion industry and the illustrated press, and an informative parallel between the two. Fashion photography fulfils a function both for fashion and the media, providing exposure for the former and content for the latter. Yet as the proximity of model and media suggest in these newsstand photographs, the latest look like the weekly edition has a limited shelf-life. This repeated *mise-en-scène* of the model in front of the newsstand highlights how Marshall McLuhan’s definition of the advert as a ‘self-

⁵² ‘Lassen Sie sich verführen, quädige Frau: *Weltbild* macht eine kleine Frühlingsreise zu den Hauptstädten der Mode’, *Weltbild*, 1 March 1953, pp. 16-7.

⁵³ *Weltbild*, 1 September, 1953, pp. 8-9.

liquidating form' applies equally to fashion and the illustrated press.⁵⁴ The search for the next look (or the next thing to look at) manifests an obsession with the present and the future which entails a rejection (literally, a disregard) for last week's fashion and last week's news. The paradox of these magazines in general and fashion photography in particular being that, in asserting the importance of a city's image it also points to the unstable nature of such discursive constructions – the image of a given city is under constant challenge and possible revision.

For its part, the French illustrated press was less playful in the verbal and visual rhetoric used in the contest of city images through fashion photography. The re-assertion of Paris's position as *the* fashion capital used forceful language. *Paris-Match* spoke of the fashion wars and of an offensive by Rome.⁵⁵ But as well as being a rejoinder to other cities' designs on Paris' status as a capital of fashion, the presentism of fashion photography is also a riposte to the legacy of the war in Paris. That is, the assertion of fashionable and forward-looking city images must be understood in the context of postwar visual culture as a culture of aftermath. For instance, in September 1951 *Paris-Match* published a lavishly illustrated six-page feature called simply 'La nouvelle mode' (fig. 4.2.4). The four pages immediately preceding this was an article on one of what Wakeman has called 'the sacrificial spaces of the city'.⁵⁶ It shows the empty site of Fort Mont-Valérien in the Paris suburbs (fig. 4.2.5), where the Nazis had carried out executions. The title of this preceding photo-story is simply, '1,500 Frenchmen were shot here'. In this issue, fashion photography and images of the spaces haunted by the war's legacy come face to face. The significance of fashion photography and the city images it asserted and contested must be understood in this dynamic tension between such visualisations of the past and desires for the future: fashion photography was a means to exorcise the city's haunted image. Likewise, in *Weltbild* the image of the Kaiser Wilhelm Gedächtniskirche as the backdrop for a fashion shoot represents the effort to overlay visual reminders of the past in the city with new city images, new associations. The self-liquidating form of the photo-magazine in general and fashion photography in particular – with the unceasing cascade of images they generated – were thus mobilised to challenge the memory

⁵⁴ Marshall McLuhan, *Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1964), p. 232.

⁵⁵ 'La guerre des modes', *Paris-Match*, 27 Oct 1951, pp. 38-39; '15 jours avant Paris la mode romaine prend l'offensive', *Paris-Match*, 31 July 1954, p. 47.

⁵⁶ Wakeman, p. 29.

traces of war inscribed in urban spaces. In this, they parallel the night-time photography and images of pageantry which depicted the parade of postwar urban spectacles.

If it was effective, the success of this challenge to urban memory through visual culture was realised through the affective capacities of the illustrated page, namely, the pleasures of looking which the magazines proposed afresh each week. A sequence of fashion photographs in *Heute* from February 1951 is emblematic of this voyeuristic pleasure (figs. 4.1 and 4.2.6). Five of the seven images depict men looking at a fashion model. The act of pleasurable viewing which fashion photography invited audiences to partake in is captured in the images themselves, the men looking at the models enacting a similar practice of gratifying spectatorship which the fashion photograph offers. Fashion – as demonstrated by these photographs of men looking and women being looked at – constitutes a network of visual exchanges. Like the photography of urban spectacle, the fashion photograph extends this process of visual exchange to a wider audience or community of spectators. The woman is offered as an object to be looked at; men are invited to enjoy this looking. At the same time, women are invited to enjoy the exhibitionism entailed by the quality of ‘to-be-looked-at-ness’ which fashionable attire promises.⁵⁷ Equally – evidenced by the fact that fashion photography was as prevalent in women’s magazines as publications for a general readership – female viewers of the photo-magazines are invited to assume a male-oriented perspective and enjoy the voyeuristic pleasures of looking at women presented for visual consumption in fashionable clothing. In other words, looking at women as visual objects to be appreciated on grounds of attractiveness and stylishness is proffered as *the way to look*. A gendered way of looking which presented man as observer and woman as receiver of the gaze is naturalised to the extent that it is a gaze offered equally to both genders.⁵⁸

⁵⁷ Discussing Hollywood cinema, Laura Mulvey characterised this visual exchange as follows: ‘In their traditional exhibitionist role women are simultaneously looked at and displayed, with their appearance coded for strong visual and erotic impact so that they can be said to connote *to-be-looked-at-ness*’. As with cinema, the voyeuristic pleasure is derived or enhanced by being distanced from the scene depicted, able to view it in a sense undetected: ‘Although the film is really being shown, is there to be seen, conditions of screening and narrative conventions give the spectator an illusion of looking in on a private world’ (Laura Mulvey, ‘Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema’, in *Film Theory and Criticism: Introductory Readings*, ed. by Leo Braudy and Marshall Cohen, 5th edn (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), pp. 833–44 (pp. 837 & 836)).

⁵⁸ See Laura Mulvey, ‘After Thoughts on ‘Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema’ Inspired by King Vidor’s *Duel in the Sun* (1946)’, in *Contemporary Film Theory*, ed. by Antony Easthope (Harlow: Longman, 1993), pp. 125–146.

Such analysis is as relevant to fashion photography of the twenty-first as it is to the mid-twentieth century. What is pertinent here is that, the pleasure of looking offered by fashion photography not only creates a gendered perspective to which viewers are recruited. It also creates a perspective structured around notions of past, present and future. The pleasure of viewing fashion photographs, like the consumption of architectural imagery on the pages of the architectural guidebooks, entailed the transformation of urban spaces into objects of visual consumption and sources of visual pleasure. This transformation constituted an overcoming of the city's function as *aide-memoire* to the past war. This was a visual pleasure offered equally to viewers in the three comparator countries regardless of nationality. Laura Mulvey argued of cinematic conventions that they 'create a gaze, a world, and an object, thereby producing an illusion cut to the measure of desire'.⁵⁹ In the case of postwar fashion photography set in urban spaces, a pleasurable gaze was offered which thereby created imagined spaces, re-oriented from the preceding war and associated with positive images of what tomorrow might look like. This was, therefore, an illusion cut not just to erotic desire, but also the desire to overcome the destruction of the past war. Thus, voyeurism and escapism in the urban fashion photographs of the postwar illustrated press – with its trade in and co-constitutive construction of city images – are intimately interconnected in offering viewers membership of hopeful postwar emotional communities spanning national boundaries.

These combined pleasures of escapism and voyeurism were not restricted to fashion photography. Photographs by Ernst Haas of Hyde Park exemplify the manner in which the co-constitutive process of city image creation was achieved through images of everyday leisure activities, which equally offered pleasures of escapism and voyeurism. Figs. 4.2.7 and 4.2.8 show double page spreads from *Point de vue* and *Illustrated* respectively.⁶⁰ The journeying of images across borders was in part a result of the changing nature of photographers' working patterns in the postwar period. More and more photographers were working through agencies rather than being affiliated to one magazine. Magnum Photos – of which Haas was a member from 1947 – is only the most famous example of this mode of working. It saw images appearing in multiple publications under various different rubrics, agencies marketing and pre-selling stories

⁵⁹ Mulvey, pp. 833–44 (p. 843).

⁶⁰ ('Hyde Park', *Point de vue – Images du monde*, 2 August 1951, pp. 12-15; Richard Dimbleby, 'The Manor of Hyde', *Illustrated*, 19 August 1950, pp. 26-31). The article in *Illustrated* also included images by Erich Auerbach.

directly to a number of magazines. Showing a wide range of people pursuing different leisure activities, the Hyde Park depicted in *Illustrated* is an 'oasis of 273 acres [where] you meet all manner of people – talkers, sleepers, swimmers, lovers, even a shepherd with his flock'.⁶¹ The park is a meeting point for inhabitants of the city and a place to escape from the hectic urban scene. The Hyde Park seen on the pages of *Point de vue* presents a very different image. London as represented here by a Sunday in Hyde Park is dominated by a cast of caricatures from speaker's corner – a sort of photographic *Guignol*. The magazine's audience is invited to find these characters excessive and ridiculous. A modicum of normality is introduced (a man asleep on the grass, a baby, a young couple kissing) as if simply to emphasise the excesses of the other protagonists. This is but one set of images and two different ways of framing them, but it illustrates the manner in which various themes – one of which was leisure time – recur across the magazines of the comparator nations. Within those shared themes, even drawing on a set of images by the same photographer, different images of a given city are proposed or contested. What unifies these divergent city images is the pleasurable viewing experiences offered the audiences of the illustrated press through the photographic representation of European urban centres.

Leisure time was perhaps a more problematic topic in West Germany. Depictions of other nations enjoying their leisure time appeared on the pages of German photo-magazines, such as a picture-story showing the middle and upper classes shopping on the streets of Kensington.⁶² But a photo-story like fig. 4.2.9 is representative of the more fraught question of leisure in postwar West Germany. It depicted the new backdrop to parks and riversides in Munich, Cologne and Berlin made by the creation of hills from the rubble which was not capable of being processed and re-used.⁶³ The representation of leisure time was not straightforward in German publications, but nor was it ideologically innocent in French or British publications. Fig. 4.2.10 shows a one-page piece with a principal image by Doisneau.⁶⁴ This one-page montage collects together images of intellectuals in a bistro, workers in a café, a rural scene and a street scene. The suggestion of community provided by this diversity of subjects is reinforced by the title, 'The break: a human necessity of modern life'. But

⁶¹ Dimbleby, p. 27.

⁶² 'Kensington: Eine Geschäftstrasse in London', *Quick*, 15 August 1948, p. 6.

⁶³ 'Neue Berge im Deutschland', *Weltbild*, 1 July 1952, pp. 16-17.

⁶⁴ 'La Pause: la nécessité humaine de la vie moderne', *Point de vue – Images du monde*, 29 Oct 1953, p. 25.

while the images depict quintessentially French pleasures now indelibly associated through the photography of the 1950s with the idea of Paris and France (wine, bread, cheese, cigarettes, camaraderie), an incongruous reference jumps out of the text. In discussing an appropriate break time beverage, the text asserts, 'milk, fruit juice, a Coca-Cola are all particularly recommended for being fresh, energy-giving and hygienic'.⁶⁵ Whether an example of explicit product placement or simply evidence of the assimilation of Coke into France, this striking reference reveals another side to what otherwise appears as a quintessential example of French humanist photography.⁶⁶ These images of leisure which contribute to creating the image of the various major cities that recur throughout these publications elevate everyday moments of leisure or escape to the status of photo-story. They monumentalise these moments, offering them back to the spectator as a form of visual pleasure, albeit one entangled with other broader questions, be it the war's legacy or increasing consumerism.

Undoubtedly one of the most familiar images from the photo-magazines of the period is Doisneau's famous image of two young lovers, most frequently titled 'The Kiss at the Hôtel de Ville' (fig. 4.2.11). Like fashion photographs, images of romance offered another form of voyeuristic viewing pleasure. This particular photograph, taken for *Life* magazine, was first printed in the United States in June 1950.⁶⁷ Disingenuously proffered as an unposed scene from everyday street life in Paris, it became, as Nina Lager Vestberg has noted, 'the very "brand image" of postwar Parisian romance'.⁶⁸ Noting the original market for this particular image, Vestberg has also observed that such images were 'from the outset conceived as commodities aimed at an international market'.⁶⁹ This is equally true of Haas' photographs of Hyde Park. An adequate understanding of the familiar black and white postwar photography needs to grasp both

⁶⁵ 'Le lait, les jus de fruits, Coca-Cola, sont tous particulièrement indiqué parce-que frais, reconstituants, hygiéniques' ('La Pause', p. 25).

⁶⁶ Richard Kuisel evaluates the brief furore surrounding the opening of the company's first bottling plant in France in 1949, noting the communist reaction against 'coca-colonisation' (Kuisel, pp. 52–69). For the fascinating story of Coke in postwar Germany see Jeff R. Schutts, 'Born Again in the Gospel of Refreshment? Coca-Colonization and the Re-making of Postwar German Identity', in *Consuming Germany in the Cold War*, ed. by David F. Crew (Oxford: Berg, 2003), pp. 121–150.

⁶⁷ 'Speaking of Pictures: In Paris Young Lovers Kiss Wherever They Want and Nobody Seems to Care', *Life*, 12 June 1950, pp. 16–18.

⁶⁸ Nina Lager Vestberg, 'Photography as Cultural Memory: Imag(in)ing France in the 1950s', *Journal of Romance Studies*, 5 (2005), 75–90 (p. 78).

⁶⁹ Nina Lager Vestberg, 'Robert Doisneau and the Making of a Universal Cliché', *History of Photography*, 35 (2011), 157–165 (p. 163).

the viewing pleasures it offered to its audiences and the transnational networks of exchange in which it circulated. As Hamilton has suggested and a review of these magazines reinforces, the vision of France in the 1950s (likewise Britain and West Germany) was at least as much the product of publication in the illustrated press abroad as at home.⁷⁰ Like the Coca-Cola brand or the latest look from Dior, city images were part of an economy of export- and importation from which their particular significance or value in the postwar moment was derived. Pierre Nora exemplified this model of cultural value formation in relation to the Eiffel Tower: 'Because foreigners take the Eiffel Tower to be the very image of France, the country has strongly internalized the world's regard'.⁷¹ Questions of vision in general and ways of looking at and thinking about urban space in particular were thus subject to complex cross-cultural exchange. By turns, postwar urban photography of the illustrated press helped shape an imagined community of Western European nations and was shaped by the circulation of city images back and forth across national borders. Whether it was the escapism of the spectacle, the glamour of fashion photography or voyeuristic images of young lovers, part of the pleasure such discursive formations offered was the suggestion of a shared regard.

⁷⁰ Peter Hamilton, 'La Photographie humaniste: un style made in France?', in *La Photographie humaniste, 1945-1968: Autour d'Izis, Boubat, Brassai, Doisneau, Ronis ...*, ed. by Laure Beaumont-Maillet, François Denoyelle and Dominique Versavel (Paris: Bibliothèque Nationale de France, 2006), pp. 27–34.

⁷¹ Cited in Henri Loyrette, 'The Eiffel Tower', in *Realms of Memory: The Construction of the French Past*, ed. by Lawrence Kritzman, trans. by Arthur Goldhammer, 3 vols. (New York: Columbia University Press, 1998), III, 347–76 (p. 350).

4.3 *Humanisation and Cold War Identities: The Divided City of Berlin*

While representations of urban space offering the gratifications of escapism and spectacle, glamour and voyeurism were prominent in the photo-magazines of the postwar period, questions of conflict and politics were as much a part of the panorama offered by these publications. Such questions were integral to the co-constitutive and dynamic relation between the various cities' respective images. This section will address representative examples of the depiction of Berlin which circulated as the political and economic framework of a European community was being debated and established, and as the Cold War prompted increasing polarisation between east and west. As discussed in chapter three, West Germany was on the frontline of this conflict. In short, images of the divided former capital in the illustrated press of the early 1950s contributed to a process of cultural assimilation between the three comparator countries, whereby the status as former adversaries was negotiated and new forms of association were articulated. To paraphrase the foreign ministers of Britain, France and the United States, this process was part of West Germany's return to the Western European community.⁷² In addition to this acceptance of West Germany, the process also entailed – and this was not articulated by the foreign ministers – an acceptance by West Germany of a place in the Western European community and its nascent institutions. In other words, moves towards economic integration and political cooperation were complemented by cross-national cultural practices and artefacts which facilitated both the accommodation of West Germany within a notion of Western European culture, and the familiarisation of the notion of such a cultural community of nations within West Germany. Despite the severity of the past conflict and the gravity of the Cold War present which photography of Berlin made plain, such images offered their own forms of pleasure or emotional rewards centred on invitations to the viewer of photo-magazines to identify themselves with certain representations or disassociate themselves from others – a phenomenon that fed directly into the broader geopolitical transitions of the postwar moment.

⁷² 'The Allies are resolved to pursue their aim laid down in the Washington Agreement of April 1949 and reaffirmed at Petersburg that Germany shall re-enter progressively the community of free peoples of Europe' ('Declaration on Germany issued by the Foreign ministers of Great Britain, the United States, and France after the conclusion of their London conference on 11-13 May 1950 (13 May 1950)', *Documents on Germany Under Occupation, 1945-1954*, ed. by Beate Ruhm von Oppen (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1955), p. 487).

The first issue of *Paris-Match* featured an article on Berlin which depicted in colour images the city's ruins and its inhabitants (fig. 4.3.1).⁷³ The article employed a charged verbal rhetoric: 'The fate of the world plays out in Berlin against a backdrop reminiscent of the last days of Pompeii [...]. To this nightmarish face-off, where each side thinks the slightest loss of attention would be fatal and struggles to sleep standing up, has been given the name, "the Cold War".'⁷⁴ Notably at odds with such dramatic statements are the photographs which picture the human story of the divided city. These images are portraits of the occupants at 25 Goethestrasse. Quite unlike the depopulated images of the ruin photobooks in the first few years after the war, this article emphasised the human interest story amid still-devastated cities. This representational strategy or formula was often repeated in the photo-stories which depicted West German urban space to French and British viewers in the early 1950s. Similarly, West German magazines also carried numerous photo-stories foregrounding an individual's presence in or experience of postwar German cities. For instance, *Quick* published an article in January 1950 including a dozen images by David Seymour and Hanns Hubmann (fig. 4.3.2).⁷⁵ Covering aspects of day-to-day experience, the photographs had epic titles such as 'Future', 'Development', 'Hunger', 'Past' or 'Love'. Each image depicted an urban scene and portrayed one of its inhabitants. A young woman is pictured in one, modelling clothes on the building site of the Grindelhochhäuser in Hamburg. The caption, drawing an instructive parallel between reconstruction and the re-emergence of the fashion scene, provides an unwitting metaphor for the role fashion played in the 'construction' ('Aufbau') of a city's image. Notably, this portrayal of postwar German urban life is not unreservedly positive. The threat of neo-fascism and the appeal of mystics are represented, as well as the recovery symbolised by the return of female fashion or attendance at social events. In each instance, urban scenes in the life of this newly constituted nation are presented to the magazine's audience through the presence of another individual.

This picturing the 'human interest story' of life amid the rubble in the contested city is a strategy repeated in *Picture Post* the same year. A photo-story by photographer Umbo [Otto Umbehr], through a profile of a West Berlin family, offered

⁷³ 'Berlin, 12 Mars 1949', *Paris-Match*, 25 March 1949, pp. 18-20.

⁷⁴ 'Le sort du monde se joue à Berlin, dans un décor de derniers jours de Pompéi. [...] A ce face à face hallucinant, où chacun pense que la moindre d'inattention lui serait fatale, à ce combat à dormir debout, on a donné le nom de guerre froide' ('Berlin, 12 Mars 1949', p. 18).

⁷⁵ 'Deutschland in Jahr 5', *Quick*, 1 January 1950, pp. 9-11.

viewers an insight into everyday life in the city (fig. 4.3.3).⁷⁶ The strap-line to the article asks, 'What does life feel like today to the people who live in the split city of Berlin? [...] We asked a German photographer and a journalist-contributor to compile a picture of the city and its prospects, as they now appear to the anxious eyes of the Berliners themselves.' Alongside the story of the Matuczewski family run images and discussions of the broader context of the city, such as a portrait of mayor Theodor Heuss (described as 'virtual "Prime Minister" of the city') or an inset profiling four architects and the challenges they face (figs. 4.3.4 and 4.3.5). Discussing the use of photography in *Heute*, James Rolleston described:

[...] photography's dramatizing power to link, in one- or two-page spreads, everyday scenes to larger themes that may give them meaning. Such themes are often formalized in the images or words of a statesman, while local faces and events move around them on the page; the omnipresent ruins serve as background for a suggestive counter-image.⁷⁷

This is exactly the manner in which this article works, placing a particular family's experience within a broader picture, counter-posing the images of ruins with the everyday efforts of local people, and animating the broader issues through the figures of professionals and politicians. This article may offer the voyeurism of seeing behind closed doors, but more importantly perhaps it provides an opportunity for identification. Figuratively speaking, it invites the audience of *Picture Post* to get to know their neighbours and their situation.

In the commentary accompanying a photo-essay by Henri Cartier-Bresson printed in *Illustrated* the following year, this representation of the human interest factor is taken one step further (fig. 4.3.6).⁷⁸ Willi Frischauer writes of a 'city with a split personality' and compares the divided capital with a couple he witnessed on a Berlin street: 'the devoted young wife whose shapely leg moved in pathetic rhythm with the awkward artificial limb of her husband. Somehow this couple seemed to me typical of the ravaged, crippled Berlin bravely adjusting itself to a strange postwar existence, limping into an uncertain future.' This feature, like the one in *Picture Post*, describes a

⁷⁶ 'Berlin 1950', *Picture Post*, 14 Oct 1950, pp. 11-17.

⁷⁷ Rolleston, 1-19 (p. 8).

⁷⁸ Willi Frischauer, 'Europe's Strangest City', *Illustrated*, 8 September 1951, pp. 11-15.

tourist experience of Berlin and is itself an act of tourism by the proxy means of the magazine. But as well as the enjoyment of the strange, transfigured city spaces of Berlin (the propaganda on the burnt-out shell of Columbushaus on Potsdamer Platz, the fourth floor kitchen still in use though open to the elements following bomb damage, the old woman hawking religious statues purloined from the ruins), there is also a series of images which emphasise normality. Everyday life on the Kurfürstendamm is pictured. Shops and cafés are open. The ruin of the Kaiser Wilhelm Gedächtniskirche (not yet a memorial) has become an accepted landmark, 'a focal point when finding your way' (fig. 4.3.7). The cityscape of this street is described as 'what Piccadilly is to London, the Champs Elysees to Paris'. In this, like the other representations of German urban space, there is an important assimilation being enacted. Through a cocktail of touristic voyeurism, and visual and verbal humanisation, a negotiation of West Germany's difference and a playing on its similarity to other Western European cities is pursued. This magazine's British audience is invited to identify with both the plight of the city's inhabitants and, in an important sense, the plight of the city as a whole. This foregrounding of the human element or human interest factor is implicated in the wider context of the Cold War identity politics. It is a strategy of identification, of positing an imagined, transnational community of Western Europe. As suggested in chapter one with reference to Benedict Anderson's discussion of national identity as an imagined community, a defining feature of the postwar moment is the assertion of transnational imagined communities extending beyond the boundaries of the nation state.⁷⁹ Without necessarily glossing over the disparities, differences and difficulties evident on the streets of a city like Berlin, inclusion in this community is possible because the terms of inclusion are the recognition of a common humanity which makes everyday life in Paris, Berlin or London comparable despite difference.

This identification is enacted through the work of the camera. It is no coincidence that a large number of the magazine captions and strap-lines refer to photography, a picture of the city, and how people view it. The idea of 'the face of the city' is repeated in many of the articles; those about Berlin, but also those about Paris and London. It recurs as a stock phrase, but also as a mode of image-making. That is, time and again strategies of humanisation are repeated – an effort which encompasses attempts to humanise a city's inhabitants, but also the idea of the city itself. In

⁷⁹ Anderson asserted that, 'No nation imagines itself coterminous with mankind' (Anderson, p. 12). In chapter five, further examples of photography's relation to imagined transnational (as opposed to national) imagined communities will be examined.

Precarious Life (2006), Judith Butler considered the role of images in United States political discourse following the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001. Butler concludes this philosophical inquiry into the role of representation by considering, 'the various ways that representation works in relation to humanization and dehumanization' with particular reference to the figure of the face.⁸⁰ The face, Butler argues, can be deployed as a means to humanise a given subject in that it can invite an audience to take part in a process of identification. This is precisely the strategy of the coverage of Berlin, both in the picturing of individuals and the metaphor of 'the face of the city' – they constitute representations of Berlin which humanise West Germans.⁸¹

Butler also draws attention to the role of what she calls 'disidentification'. That is, the invitation to the audience to refuse identification. Her discussion highlights the capacity of repeated representations and rhetoric to bring about the effacement of the significance of the face, 'foreclosing our apprehension of the human in the scene'.⁸² Butler describes such dehumanising through the figure of the face as 'one of the representational and philosophical consequences of war itself'.⁸³ Exemplifying this is the ambivalent representation of East Germany which also circulated in the illustrated press of West Germany, as well Britain and France, at the time. An example of this self-definition in contradistinction can be found in *Neue Illustrierte*. Only two weeks after the coverage of the Cologne carnival in 1950 contrasted the celebration of that festival with the town's destruction (fig. 4.1.1), the magazine criticized East German approaches to the wartime destruction of Dresden (fig. 4.3.8).⁸⁴ The one page feature includes a photo of the dead piled up in the square after the bombing raids of February 1945. Reprinted alongside this is a quotation from the East German press which claims the bombing lacked any military necessity. Also included is a retort from the British foreign ministry, making the counter claim that the Soviet authorities twice requested

⁸⁰ Judith Butler, *Precarious Life: The Powers of Mourning and Violence* (London: Verso, 2006), p. 145.

⁸¹ That is not to suggest that this humanising phenomenon was only seen in the illustrated press and only at the start of the 1950s. Indeed, Ministry of Information propaganda in Britain during the war was at pains not to dehumanise the German nation *en masse*, but to focus attention on the Nazi leadership. The humanisation of West Germans in the illustrated press of the early 1950s can be considered a complementary strategy to this approach, not a novel form of representation.

⁸² Butler, p. 147.

⁸³ Butler, p. 143.

⁸⁴ 'Propaganda mit dem Tod', *Neue Illustrierte*, 2 March 1950, p. 6.

the bombing of Dresden by Allied planes. What this coverage achieves is a distancing of the dead and the living depicted in these photographs. There is a marked absence of any close-up portraits or named individuals which could literally give the story a face. As politics looms large – asserted by the notion of propaganda in the article's title, foregrounded by the contrast in official interpretations of the bombing – the people of Dresden recede into the background, behind the posters and images of Stalin and a forest of flags referenced in the captions. The human element is not stressed in this representation of Dresden. Indeed, the British foreign ministry spokesperson is more present, as a result of their prominent citation, than any individual East German. As a result, a non- or a disidentification with Dresdeners – and by association all East Germans – is invited.

Again, in *Neue Illustrierte*, another article suggests another form of identification which goes hand in hand with this distancing from the east. Photographs by Wolfgang Weber depict towns in the US with the same name as German towns (figs. 4.3.9 and 4.3.10).⁸⁵ A postman, school children, retirees – the images are populated by smiling individuals who in many instances look directly out from the page. The invitation of these gazes worked to turn the eyes of the magazine's West German audience away from the east and towards the west.⁸⁶ This complementary network of representational strategies is prevalent in the early 1950s following the official establishment of the two German states: humanisation and identification on the one hand, and a marked absence of humanising strategies with a consequent disidentification on the other.⁸⁷ This is not to suggest that depictions of East Germans never provided a humanising face. However, the heavy use of this technique for representations of West Germans in contrast to its sparse use for depicting their Eastern counterparts is striking and significant. Coupled with this disassociating means of representation is a focus on the

⁸⁵ 'Hamburg, Jena, Gotha, Stuttgart und Hamburg gelegen in den USA!', *Neue Illustrierte*, 19 April 1950, pp. 8-9.

⁸⁶ A comparable example in the same publication the following month pursued the same ends through a different visual rhetoric, extolling the virtues of American urbanisation and working to present an impressive rather than a human image of the west ('Das ist Los Angeles: Die moderneste Stadt von Welt', *Neue Illustrierte*, 24 May 1950, pp. 2-5).

⁸⁷ Butler considers extreme examples, such the faces of Saddam Hussein or Osama Bin Laden, which become dehumanised and equated with notions of evil, 'producing a symbolic identification of the face with the inhuman' (p. 147). Such an extreme case does not apply here. The East Germans were not demonized in the illustrated press of the 1950s. However, the notion of disidentification is a valid one for considering the ambivalent representations of East German urban scenes in the West German illustrated press and illuminating the marked difference between the way in which east and west were represented in popular publications like *Quick* and *Neue Illustrierte*.

Soviet presence, not mirrored by depictions of the Allied presence in West Germany. Coverage of the uprising in East Berlin in June 1953 exemplifies this. Including striking workers from the Stalinallee construction site, the protest was a result of policies to increase production. An article in *Quick* exhibits the, at best, ambivalent representation of East Germans (fig. 4.3.11).⁸⁸ The individuals caught up in this event are depicted. Yet, the representation is preoccupied with the potential violence of the Soviet response it met, rather than giving a face to those protesting. Jonathan Sperber has suggested that this mode of representation, which centred on the presence of the Soviet military, has even coloured interpretation of the event in the intervening years: 'The pictures of youthful insurgents throwing stones at Soviet tanks, which have become the characteristic images of 17 June 1953, were quite atypical and distort the actual nature of the events.'⁸⁹

Likewise, the depictions of West Germans in the illustrated press of France and Britain were not universally humanising or positive. The French magazines often exhibited a marked ambivalence, especially in relation to proposed rearmament. But reservations or scepticism are arguably contained within a broad acceptance of the realigned allegiances of postwar Western Europe. Moreover, urban photography in the illustrated press played an appreciable role in this process of articulating and forging these allegiances through strategies of humanisation and identification. *Paris-Match*, in a photograph by Maurice Jarnoux of German boys playing at being soldiers, provided an instructive example of this phenomenon (fig. 4.3.12).⁹⁰ The photograph shows the children amidst the ruined buildings of Bonn. The symbolic value of this child's play as suggested by the caption is 'the image of a Germany rearmed'.⁹¹ The children are a surrogate for West Germany as a whole. At another level, the audience is also invited to identify with the children. They are compared to children the world over.⁹² This universalising is relevant to the emerging Western European identity of the time. These

⁸⁸ 'Der Aufstand von Berlin', *Quick*, 28 June 1953, pp. 3-8.

⁸⁹ (Jonathan Sperber, '17 June 1953: Revisiting a German Revolution', *German History*, 22 (2004), 619 –643 (p. 638)). The cover of *Der Stern* (28 June 1953) showed an alternative, humanising vision of East Berliners walking under the Brandenburg Gate along what was to become Straße des 17. Juni. However, the distanced and distancing coverage of *Quick* is more representative of depictions of East Germany in the photo-magazines of the three comparator countries in the early 1950s.

⁹⁰ Jean-Paul Penez, 'Ils ont résolu à leur façon le plus grave problème de l'Europe', *Paris-Match*, 20 June 1951, p. 27.

⁹¹ 'L'image de l'Allemagne rearmée' (Penez, p. 27).

⁹² 'Comme tous les enfants du monde' (Penez, p. 27).

children are represented or offered to the viewer as a sympathetic human face to the new German nation and the thorny question of rearmament. Importantly, there is a complex balance here, between identification with West Germans – through the figure of the children – and recognition of difference.⁹³ There is ambivalence or unease about rearmament, alongside a broader sense of inclusivity or similarity. The imagined community of Western Europe, in other words, was a sufficiently flexible concept to accommodate difference or difference of opinion against a background of a recognised broader sameness, defined in part in contradistinction to the East.

As interesting as this interleaved acceptance of inclusion and the suggestion of reticence which the photograph and its caption illuminate, is the fact that a copy of *Heute* hangs on the wall. Eisenhower is on its cover, playing the role of idealised general to the boys' pretend soldiers. With one magazine pictured in another, this photograph performs the notion of a dialogue between images which runs throughout this study. It also exemplifies the way in which the photographic press facilitated social relations – the boy's game being focused around this object. It depicts an instance of uptake of the points of view offered by the illustrated press. These magazines invited an identification by their audiences with the images on their pages. And here, obviously, the West German boys have identified with the image of their imaginary commander in chief. In doing so, they exhibit an orientation towards western democracies. This scene vividly portrays the role of the illustrated press in image creation and circulation, their relation to fundamental issues relevant to European cooperation, and an instance of both an invitation to identify with the perspectives offered and of uptake. Moreover, all this takes place in the ruins of the new West German capital. As a photograph in the illustrated press which depicts the use and significance of another press image, it is a particularly revealing urban photograph.⁹⁴ It highlights the co-constitutive nature of city images by capturing one particular interaction – an example of *Heute* in use in Bonn, offered to French viewers in the pages of *Paris-Match*. Additionally, it highlights the manner in which such co-constitutive images facilitated emotional communities – the identification of the West German boys with the west works to promote the identification of western viewers with

⁹³ Additionally, the representation of the new German nation through the image of children carries an ambiguous allusion to the future: these children (like the new state) could develop in different ways, suggesting both hopeful and fearsome futures. The use of photographs of children in the early campaigns and publications of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) will be discussed further in chapter five.

⁹⁴ W. J. T. Mitchell has termed such images 'meta-pictures': an image which offers 'second-order reflections on the practices of pictorial representation' (Mitchell, *Picture Theory*, p. 9).

West Germans. Finally, the self-referential nature of the image offers a perspective on the postwar importance of culture in general and photography in particular. In depicting another photo-magazine framed by the serious question of rearmament, the centrality of ways of seeing and visual culture to Cold War politics is asserted. Marshall McLuhan characterised the Cold War as ‘an electric battle of information and images that goes far deeper and is more obsessional than the old hot wars of industrial hardware’, going on to describe how this ‘war of the icons’ entailed ‘the eroding of the collective countenance of one’s rivals’.⁹⁵ On the pages of the photo-magazines of the early 1950s – in the humanising images of some, the invitations to disidentify with others and the notion of ‘the face of the city’ – is exhibited the formative function photographs of urban space played in the increasingly polarised field of Cold War identity politics.

⁹⁵ McLuhan, p. 339.

4.4 *Amateur Photography Campaigns and the Wondrous Urban*

Writing about *Picture Post* in 1972, Stuart Hall distinguished between those magazines he called 'pictures-over-text' and 'text-over-pictures' publications.⁹⁶ All the publications under consideration in this chapter fall into the former category. From the front cover of the photo-magazine to the back, the image predominated. The photograph featured in many forms (fashion image, news round-up, current affairs feature, advertising image or publicity shots) and the primacy of the photo was a defining characteristic of the illustrated press distinguishing it from newspapers of the period. This may seem like an unnecessary, even tautological description of the photographic press. But in these magazines can be traced a blueprint for what was to come. In the twenty-first century, the image and the text are thoroughly intertwined in most media or modes of publishing, particularly of course the internet. It would be more difficult today to draw the cut and dried distinction that Hall did. However, looking back at the illustrated press at the beginning of the 1950s is not so much looking back at an obsolete format. The illustrated press of the time was a stage in the development of – one of the prototypes for – the many familiar publishing 'platforms' ubiquitous today, where the image and the story's shelf-life are practically inextricable. Characteristic of these magazines at this time is the preoccupation or obsession with the photographic image, its production, its potential and the views it offered. The extent to which they foreground the image and the manner in which they represent and discuss the process of photography itself, both distinguishes postwar photo-magazines from the publishing formats which succeeded them and makes apparent the important implications of photography's ubiquity for the conception of urban space.

Gisèle Freund has argued that, 'It was only when the image itself became the story that photojournalism was born.'⁹⁷ In these magazines, not only is the photograph the story, often the photographer and the very practice of photography itself become the primary focus. For instance, in May 1950 *Picture Post* printed an otherwise unremarkable photo-story by Bert Hardy featuring Audrey Hepburn in Richmond Park and Kew Gardens (fig. 4.4.1).⁹⁸ Titled, 'We take a girl to look for spring', it made the acts of looking and photographing the defining elements of the feature. Likewise, in

⁹⁶ Stuart Hall, 71–120 (p. 75).

⁹⁷ Gisèle Freund, *Photography and Society* (London: Gordon Fraser, 1980), p. 115.

⁹⁸ 'We take a girl to look for spring', *Picture Post*, 13 May 1950, pp. 43-45.

numerous articles the photographer was the story. Figs. 4.4.2 and 4.4.3 show examples from France which came out at the time Izis published *Grand bal de printemps* (1951) with Jacques Prévert and Henri Cartier-Bresson published *Images à la sauvette* (1952).⁹⁹ While the myth of the poetic photographer-artist had particular currency in France, the German illustrated press laboured the myth of the intrepid photojournalist dedicated to the task of capturing the image for the audience. A cover of *Quick* in early 1950 showed photographer Hans Ertl with a concealed camera under his hat (figs. 4.4.4 and 4.4.5). The article in question profiled a number of photographers who published regularly in the magazine, its title ('The World Belongs to the *Quick* Reader') fusing a promise of revelation and possession on behalf of photography.¹⁰⁰ Similarly, following his death, *Picture Post* printed a tribute to Robert Capa by John Steinbeck.¹⁰¹ Of course, this championing of the medium and its 'masters' was not novel to the postwar period. *Picture Post* had heralded Capa as 'the world's greatest war photographer' in 1938.¹⁰² What is distinctive about the early 1950s is that it was to prove the high-water mark for sustained and self-reflexive consideration on photography *qua* photography. Such explicit verbal boasting and visual showboating was set to recede in photo-magazines over the coming decade.

Related to this foregrounding of and intense interest in photography as a medium in the illustrated press of the early 1950s, is a mode of image-making which transfigured the everyday urban scene through the photograph. These individual photographs or short sequences garnered minimal captions or commentary in the magazines themselves, but they illuminate the preoccupation of the illustrated magazines of the period in relation to the medium and practice of photography. This mode of image-making – which might be labelled, the wondrous urban – offered the city as a visual artefact to marvel at. It operates by taking the quotidian and quoting it out of context, often in conjunction with poetic or allusive captions, to turn it into something held to have a surreal or dream-like character.¹⁰³ Such photographs offered

⁹⁹ 'Prévert et Izis ont fait un duo en soixante-deux photos-poèmes', *Paris-Match*, 5 January 1952, pp. 38-39; 'Cartier-Bresson: Le grand poète de la photographie présente ses chefs-d'œuvre', *Paris-Match*, 11 October 1952, pp. 34-39.

¹⁰⁰ 'Dem *Quick*-Leser gehört die Welt', *Quick*, 29 Jan 1950, pp. 4-10.

¹⁰¹ *Picture Post*, 12 June 1954, p. 5.

¹⁰² Likewise, the mid-twentieth century witnessed parallel trends in journalism, with growing emphasis on the image of the crusading journalist or the newspaper committed to fighting injustices.

¹⁰³ There is – as in the photography of the townscape campaign in the *Architectural Review* – a connection between this mode of image-making and the surrealist or surrealist-influenced

the pleasure of transfiguration; of making the familiar unfamiliar; of realising in the photograph the poetic, romantic or whimsical potential of the street scene. It was, thus, not only a carnival or a fashion shoot that provided another way of viewing urban space, re-inscribing the image of the city with other meanings in this continuing moment of postwar recovery. Through the visual rhetoric of the wondrous urban, urban space itself becomes spectacular. One example showed life-sized mineral water bottles walking through the streets of Paris which, the caption explains, was part of an advertising campaign employing students.¹⁰⁴ Another pictured the balletic movements of a gendarme directing traffic in Paris.¹⁰⁵ Likewise, the streets of German cities were also material for representations in the transfiguring mode. As city planners achieved the physical transformation of the rubble into landscape features or parks in Germany, photographs made the ordinary urban scene into something out-of-the-ordinary. For instance, fig. 4.4.6 shows images of a car small and light enough to pull up at a café terrace, be pulled by a dog or carried in through the front door.¹⁰⁶ Some of these images became iconic, like Izis' deserted carousel (fig. 4.4.2).¹⁰⁷ Whether focused on the commercial and the comic or the poetic and the dream-like, these single images or one-page features provided another form of escapism through transfiguring the everyday into an object of wonder. As discussed with reference to Doisneau earlier in the chapter, the line between photography as cultural artefact and commercial vehicle was indistinct. As a mode of image-making, the wondrous urban spanned this line, being used to advertise products (like mineral water, automobiles and camera equipment) and in stand-alone images or one-page features which contributed to the presentation of photo-magazines as visually dynamic and engaging publications. The

photography of the interwar period. The term 'wondrous urban' here is used to imply the manner in which a specific scene or event is transformed or transfigured into something simultaneously more ambiguous and more appealing. Pierre Mac Orlan used the phrase 'poetic realism' ('le réalisme poétique') which captures this sense of the everyday made marvellous. The combination of Pierre Jahan's photographs and Jean Cocteau's captions discussed in chapter two is a comparable example of this representational strategy, albeit more melancholic than those usually found in the postwar illustrated press. For further discussion of 'le réalisme poétique' see, for instance, Marie de Thézy, *La Photographie humaniste: 1930-1960, histoire d'un mouvement en France* (Paris: Contrejour, 1992).

¹⁰⁴ 'Bottlemen of Paris', *Illustrated*, 5 Aug 1950, p. 15.

¹⁰⁵ 'Verkehrserziehung in Paris', *Quick*, 1 August 1948, p. 6.

¹⁰⁶ 'Klein, aber oho!', *Heute*, 28 July 1951, p. 24.

¹⁰⁷ This image also appeared in Britain with an obscure caption: 'We are, we think, horribly like life. Our motion is mechanically determined. We are 1951 and 1952, we are all the years and all the things that remain, the more they change, exactly the same. We take the weight of the world on our indifferent backs. Our hooves leave no trace in the winter's snow or the tender grass of spring. We are resigned to silent oblivion. We are the freezing voice of experience. But we don't expect you carefree riders to listen.' (*Picture Post*, 22 December 1951, p. 10).

frequently repeated image of the transfigured city offered a particular attitude towards or way of seeing the city. It conceived of the city as a site of aesthetic experience, be that poetic, comic, or melancholic.

Like the celebration of the photographer-poet or the intrepid photojournalist, achieving this image of city life as offering aesthetic pleasures to the trained eye was not a postwar novelty. It was a common feature of the illustrated press that took off in the interwar period. But postwar, there emerges in tandem with this emphasis on 'photographic seeing', a broader promotion of amateur photography. In the illustrated press preoccupied with negotiating the past war and present tensions between east and west, the promotion of photography as a pastime bubbles up to the surface in weekly and fortnightly magazines of a general readership in all three countries. Photography is not simply the story or the driving force of the photographic press; participation in photography becomes an end in its own right. A significant number of competitions and campaigns can be found between the covers of these magazines at this time, seeking to promote amateur photography and – moreover – modelling it on the discursive formations in which urban photography circulated in the magazines themselves. There were specialist publications marketed at the amateur photographer in the postwar period. Similarly, in the interwar period, photo-magazines had staged amateur competitions. But these postwar initiatives are notable, not because of their novelty, but because they existed in a relation with the other modes of urban photography examined already in this chapter – photographs which contributed to the discursive creation of city images and the promotion of a transnational imagined community. Through these competitions and the strategies of photographic representation of photo-magazines with which they connect, photography came to represent a quasi-egalitarian or particularly democratic leisure pursuit. As modernist architecture was the form of reconstruction held to signify modern western democratic values, amateur photography was a leisure pursuit which fused notions of individual creative freedom and technological progress. It became enmeshed with the idea of the image of the city and the promotion of visual culture as a channel of communication across borders.¹⁰⁸

Three examples from the three comparator countries will serve to highlight the significance of the postwar promotion of amateur photography in the illustrated press.

¹⁰⁸ I am grateful to Duncan Forbes, Senior Curator of Photography at the National Galleries of Scotland, for highlighting the importance of amateur photography in the postwar period.

During the Festival summer of 1951, *Picture Post* launched a 'snapshot' competition (fig. 4.4.7) with £10,000 of prizes to be won. The considerable promotion campaign included articles written by regular and recognised photographers for the magazine.¹⁰⁹ The magazine also ran photo-stories as part of the promotion which pictured the street as a source of photographic inspiration.¹¹⁰ In an article arguing that the eye of the photographer wins prizes and not the expensive camera, Hardy took an old box-camera to Blackpool and in the process made one of his most renowned images (fig. 4.4.8). The promotional pieces provided detailed advice on how to take good photos. This was principally of a practical nature, stressing for instance the need to be prepared. In the spring of 1953, *Point de vue – Images du Monde* launched a campaign promoting amateur photography called, 'Everybody should become a photographer' written principally by Albert Plécy.¹¹¹ While Hardy had stressed the practical, this campaign emphasised the question of composition, asserting that technical matters were not their primary concern and quipping, 'You do not ask how your radio works, you simply turn it on and listen.' A strong sense of a schooling in photography pervaded. The first article ending with the phrase, 'That's all for today!', and the magazine's audience was given a piece of homework each week.¹¹² *Heute* also hosted a long-running competition in its final year, 1951, under the rubric of 'Amateur reporter' (fig. 4.4.9). The details for the competition were published in the spring¹¹³ and winners were published throughout the summer. The details referred specifically to six modes of photography – people, events, current affairs, animals, sport, and impact or action shots.¹¹⁴ Excluding the categories of sports and animals,

¹⁰⁹ Kurt Hutton, 'How To Take a Contest Snap', *Picture Post*, 16 June 1951, p. 36; Bert Hardy, 'Don't Let the Picture Get Away', *Picture Post*, 23 June 1951, p. 38.

¹¹⁰ 'Sunday Morning in the Champs Elysees', *Picture Post*, 23 June 1951, pp. 34-37; 'Bert Hardy's Box-camera Blackpool', *Picture Post*, 14 July 1951, pp. 38-40.

¹¹¹ Albert Plécy, 'Devenez-tous photographe', *Point de vue – Images du monde*, 5 Feb 1953, pp. 18-19.

¹¹² This campaign was also referenced in other photo-stories, including a double-page spread on Queen Elizabeth with photographs of her using a Rolleiflex camera at the races ('Toute la Court fait de la photo', *Point de vue – Images du monde*, 30 April 1953, pp. 15-16). The commentary proudly proclaimed, 'This photo-story perfectly illustrates our campaign, "Everybody should become a photographer"' ('Ce reportage illustre a merveille notre campagne pour la photographie: <<Devenez tous photographes>>'). One of these photographs of the Queen also appeared in *Illustrated* a few years later ('The Queen and Her Camera', *Illustrated*, 18 May 1957, pp. 8-9). By 1957, photography's star as the central attraction was already on the wane and the article was dominated by more up-to-date images of the Queen using a cine-camera.

¹¹³ 'Amateur Reporter', *Heute*, 25 April 1951, pp. 20-21.

¹¹⁴ 'Effekt und überraschende Wirkung' ('Amateur Reporter', p. 21).

the images chosen to exemplify these modes of photography emphasised the urban and the everyday. Some also included the idea of transfiguring or transforming such scenes. There is an implicit challenge in the details of the competition to capture the atmosphere of a scene, or to picture both the setting and the action. This challenge holds up the professionals' accomplishments as the yardstick for competition entrants – as enforced by the two terms juxtaposed in the title, 'Amateur Reporter'. There is also a reference to Haas' image of returning prisoners of war claiming it first appeared in *Heute*. The final line reads, 'Images of this kind are of lasting value.'¹¹⁵

These three different initiatives – a snapshot contest, a promotional campaign and an amateur reporter competition – share an emphasis on photography as the vehicle of a humanising vision in one form or another. Hardy talks of 'human' pictures. The first homework set for the audience of *Point de vue* was to photograph one's family. The *Heute* competition asserts rather dryly that, 'People are an almost inexhaustible subject for good reports'. At the same time, all three campaigns also strove towards the demystification and popularisation of photography. Such campaigns promised to put the technology and techniques of photography into anyone's hands. Through these two qualities – humanising and participative – amateur photography represented a singularly democratic or egalitarian way of seeing. Despite the vigour with which it was pursued in the 1950s, the marketing of photography predates this postwar campaigning. Tagg notes how, since the invention of the Box Brownie, marketing has had to negotiate a tension between amateurism and professionalism:

These are the conflicts which make up the history of photography. On one side, the manufacturers of photographic equipment and materials have argued, since the marketing of the first Kodak camera in 1888, that anyone can take a photograph: you just point the camera and press the button; they do the rest. On the other, mass participation and the collective recording of the world have been denigrated in favour of the individual artist-photographer's subjective interpretation of what he sees.¹¹⁶

¹¹⁵ 'Bilder dieser Art sind von bleibendem Wert' ('Amateur Reporter', p. 21).

¹¹⁶ John Tagg, 'The World of Photography or Photography of the World?', in *The Camerawork Essays: Context and Meaning in Photography*, ed. by Jessica Evans (London: Rivers Oram, 1997), pp. 64–73 (pp. 72–3).

The three initiatives outlined above are all sites of interaction or dialogue between the two notions of the professional photojournalist and the amateur or the artist and the snapshot-taker. And in the first postwar decade, such divisions were not as rigid as they were to become later in the century. Photography, though straddling both amateur and professional terrains, was considered open to all. For instance, the first book published by the now-canonised Willy Ronis was a how-to manual.¹¹⁷ Likewise, in the introduction to the seminal *Images à la sauvette* (1952), Cartier-Bresson offered advice to aspiring photographers.¹¹⁸ The wondrous urban mode of image-making, profiles of photographers, amateur competitions – appearing together on the pages of the illustrated press, they were part of forging a particular significance for photography in the postwar period. Photography was held to be a humanist and egalitarian pursuit; a medium open to all, the products of which expressed the respect of the individual proposed by a democratic ideal. (This humanising vision of the medium will be further explored in the following chapter which considers UNESCO's promotion of photography as a 'universal language' and mobilisation of photography in pursuit of intercultural understanding.)

The three campaigns also have in common the promotion of an active spectatorship – an invitation to make the city street into a spectacle oneself. This similarity represents a commodification of urban space through its appropriation and transfiguration into aesthetic experience. In other words, through the promotion of amateur photography and the pursuit of city images, city space becomes just another consumer good – in a manner comparable to the 'leafing through architecture' which Morpurgo associated with architectural photography.¹¹⁹ It is instructive to contrast the appropriation through photography promoted by these initiatives with another invocation to appropriate urban space. Two decades later, in *Species of Spaces* (1974), Georg Perec urged readers to take the time to look at the city: 'Decipher a bit of the town [...] Try to classify the people'. He articulates a process of looking with a view to de-familiarising and making uncanny the surroundings which we become inured to: 'Carry on [...] until the whole thing becomes strange, and you no longer even know that this is what is called a town, a street, buildings, pavements'.¹²⁰ Perec's is an avant-

¹¹⁷ Willy Ronis, *Photo-reportage et chasse aux images* (Paris: Paul Montel, 1951).

¹¹⁸ Henri Cartier-Bresson, *Images à la sauvette* (Paris: Éditions Verve, 1952).

¹¹⁹ Morpurgo, 124–6 (p. 125).

¹²⁰ 'The Street, Section 3: Practical exercises', in Georges Perec, *Species of Spaces and Other Pieces* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 2008), pp. 50–54.

garde invocation to see the city differently; to deconstruct it. These competitions of the early 1950s invite the audience to picture the city, not afresh, but through the discursive formations of the illustrated press. The audience is urged to replicate the visual discourses or ways of seeing prevalent at the time. This is a reinforcement of the emerging consumerism and its visual forms – as opposed to the critical or distanced reflection on everyday life that Perec suggests – which worked to create an audience of spectator-citizens through this active spectatorship. Amateur photography and its promotion thus subtly married notions of consumerism, vision and democratic citizenship. It was part of a broader popular culture of mass consumption, transcending class or national cultural demarcations and extending to a transnational constituency.¹²¹

Alongside the promotion of photographic equipment as a consumer goods,¹²² urban space became increasingly commodified; the city was conceived not only as something to be consumed visually, but also something to be transformed into a visual product by the amateur with their own camera. Just a few years later, another competition in *Point de vue – Images du monde* invited readers to submit photographs for potential advertising campaigns. Fig. 4.4.10, showing a sentimental image of a child and teddy bear at a railway station aimed at promoting Kodak, exemplifies perfectly the conjunction of photography, urban space, consumerism, democratic participation and active spectatorship promoted in the postwar photo-magazines in the three comparator countries.¹²³ The consumerist promotion of amateur photography and the commodification of city space find their ultimate expression in tourism – an industry which was to grow considerably in the 1950s and which was extensively discussed and depicted in the illustrated press as the decade wore on. In Cologne today, amongst the concrete buildings that sprung up around the base of the surviving cathedral, is a camera shop. The sign above the door states proudly, ‘Lambertin: Am Dom seit 1949’ (fig. 4.4.11). The logo consists of two piercing blue eyes incorporated with the cathedral’s silhouette. This confident assertion of the shop’s establishment over sixty years ago is testament to how intimately connected the image of a postwar city like Cologne is to both its iconic buildings and the cultural practice of photography by

¹²¹ Hewitt, 351–358 (pp. 355–6).

¹²² Tony Judt drew attention to the role played by the chemicals, optics and light engineering industries in the West German economic miracle, following substantial wartime investment (Judt, *Postwar*, pp. 85–6).

¹²³ ‘Le Concours de la photo publicitaire’, *Point de vue – Images du monde*, 28 April 1955, p. 21.

amateurs and professionals alike. The disembodied eyes of the sign might be the eyes of its visitors. Equally, they could be the face of the city itself. Amateur photography is, thus, an important facet by which a closer and closer elision of a city's image with its photographic representation has been effected; by which the image *of* the city has collapsed into the city *as* image.

4.5 Conclusion: Urban Photography and Western Europe as Imagined Community

The sense of being 'European' for purposes of self-identification is a newly acquired habit. As a result, where the idea of transnational cooperation or mutual assistance might have aroused intense local suspicion, today it passes largely unnoticed.

Tony Judt¹²⁴

The mobility or wanderlust of photographs is reason enough to justify a comparative approach to the illustrated press. However, the illustrated press in Britain, France and West Germany in the early 1950s did not simply use the same photographic images or genres of images. They took part in the formation of a set of interconnected representations of cities and it is this transnational discourse that insistently demands a comparative consideration of the illustrated press of these countries at this time. Mary Panzer has asserted that, 'Before the era of television, and before the print media fragmented into a myriad of cultural niche markets, big magazines shaped and articulated the unfolding narratives of national consciousness.'¹²⁵ What this chapter has argued is that, as well as forging national consciousness through narrative means, these magazines contributed to the formation of transnational imagined communities through visual means. The illustrated press of these countries was engaged in the formation of European place identities through the image of the various cities, especially the capitals of London and Paris and the former capital of Berlin considered in detail here. These city images were in turn connected to the formation of an imagined transnational community – the idea of a Western European identity. Photography played a role in shaping this identity in the period: it engaged in negotiations of each city's past; it forged city images in a dynamic relation with those of other urban centres; it facilitated a differentiation between east and west; and it worked to recruit audiences to these perspectives through the pleasures of viewing and spectatorship it offered.

¹²⁴ Judt, *Ill Fares the Land*, p. 66.

¹²⁵ Mary Panzer, 'Introduction', in *Things As They Are: Photojournalism in Context Since 1955*, ed. by Mary Panzer and Christian Caujolle (London: Chris Boot, 2005), p. 20.

The formation of a Western European imagined community through the assertion and contestation of these city images, as well as through the promotion of photography as a pastime, was a process, not a uniform and univocal articulation. That is, the magazines provided a stage on which were played out these contests of city images and strategies of humanisation or disidentification. In the early 1950s, a large degree of uniformity emerged between the publications in the comparator countries which goes beyond simple questions of format. These magazines shared and promoted significant ways of viewing the world. They not only began to 'look alike' in the sense that they all adopted the red and white logo. They also began to 'look alike' in the sense that, the way of looking they offered their audiences (and the associated pleasures of this looking) became more and more similar. Honnef has remarked that in the early days neither *Quick*, nor *Neue Illustrierte*, nor any other German magazine, 'came anywhere near the professional standards of their American counterparts such as *Life* and *Look*'.¹²⁶ By the start of 1954, there was a remarkable uniformity, some of the important characteristics of which have been outlined above. But this uniformity was not simply about the aesthetics or professional standards; it concerned a way of seeing the world paraded in the photo-stories on the magazine pages. Central to the significant similarities between these magazines is the foregrounding of photography in the cultural process of forming place identities and transnational communities. Not all urban imagery found a transnational audience, of course. The Festival of Britain, for instance, seemed of little interest to French or West German picture editors in 1951, unlike the Coronation of 1953. But what all the spectacular urban imagery shared was a concerted effort to recast the associations of urban space with the death and destruction of wartime and to ally city images with positive emotions.

The first English language edition of the French magazine, *Réalités*, is an excellent example of the emphasis placed on both photography and transnational community in the magazines of the time.¹²⁷ The magazine begins with an editorial – unaccredited, but possibly by editor-in-chief Alfred Max – which asserts that, 'Not only England and France but all the Anglo-Saxon countries and the whole of Western Europe are now tied together by ever-increasing bonds'.¹²⁸ The address to the

¹²⁶ Honnef, p. 141.

¹²⁷ The Maison Européenne de la Photographie hosted an exhibition about *Realités* in 2008. Anne de Mondenard and Michel Guerrin, *Réalités: Un Mensuel français illustré, 1946-1978* (Arles: Actes sud, 2008).

¹²⁸ *Realities*, 1 (1950), p. 7.

magazine's audience goes on to explain the founding purpose of the glossy monthly ('to give the French people the true facts about the world and themselves so they could play their full share in that pursuit of happiness; which is the common aim of the free nations') and finishes by expressing the expectation that the English language edition will 'contribute to the successful development of our common heritage, the Western Civilization'.¹²⁹ The very first article following immediately on from this striking declaration is titled 'Photography comes of age'. It discusses both photography's place in the art world and the 'vast numbers of professional photographers, the best-known of them earning many times a cabinet minister's salary'.¹³⁰ The importance of photography to the man in the street is also stressed on when the writer asserts, 'Even the gambler who backs a horse with all his hope and fortunes involved in a shorthead finish, no longer has to curse the fallible human eyesight of what he suspects to be a somnolent or prejudiced judge'.¹³¹ This is just one in a host of striking examples which yoke together photography and the promotion of a Western European identity. Photography was, in effect, considered an essential element in the cultural Cold War between Western Europe and those other 'unfree' nations implied by the evocation of a shared heritage and civilisation. (The problematic nature of such an invocation of transnational identity or community founded in a shared heritage will be further scrutinised in the next chapter.)

The introduction to this chapter cautioned against simplistic narratives of cultural importation regarding the development of the photographic press. The flipside perhaps, to such one-dimensional accounts is the complex history of postwar cultural diplomacy – that is, the pursuit of diplomatic ends through cultural means, or the use of 'soft power'. Scholarship in this field has been growing in recent years, tackling what Liam Kennedy and Scott Lucas identify as the manner in which 'public diplomacy blurred not only the boundaries of information, culture, and propaganda, but also the boundaries of state and private identities and actions'.¹³² In particular, such research provides insight into the relation between the United States and European nations

¹²⁹ To emphasize this point regarding a shared heritage, the address is (rather incongruously) printed in the style of a highlighted medieval manuscript replete with curlicues and animated by illustrations of men and women in smocks and pointy shoes.

¹³⁰ *Realities*, p. 13.

¹³¹ *Realities*, p. 19.

¹³² Liam Kennedy and Scott Lucas, 'Enduring Freedom: Public Diplomacy and U.S. Foreign Policy', *American Quarterly*, 57 (2005), 309–333 (pp. 314–5); also relevant in this area is *The Cultural Cold War in Western Europe, 1945-1960*, ed. by Giles Scott-Smith and Hans Krabbendam (London: Frank Cass, 2003).

which is outside the scope of this study. It is to be hoped that visual culture will continue to garner attention as work in this field progresses. However, the intention here has not been to provide a history of political involvement with the press or an institutional analysis of the press conglomerates of a Luce, Hulton, Prouvost or Springer¹³³ – important as those histories are. Rather, it has been to look at the magazines themselves, how their pages offer certain forms of pleasure to their audience, and how this address had the potential to influence ways of seeing and thinking about urban space and cities in the early 1950s. Instead of tracing the story behind the pages which went to press, analysis has addressed the act of spectatorship in detail, examining the impact these pages had on attitudes to urban space and imagined communities once they hit the newsstands and even after they were thrown in the bin, having become dog-eared from being passed around. What is more, excavating the discursive creation of a Western European imagined community through urban photography and the imagined spaces it created reveals the impact of postwar visual culture on conceptions of the city and of photography.

The strong possibility always exists for refusal on the part of any particular individual regarding any particular representation not to take up the pleasures or the point of view it offers. As Mayne termed it, there is always the possibility of ‘the non-coincidence of address and reception’.¹³⁴ But the foregoing should amply demonstrate the important role photography played in manufacturing the ‘cultural plausibility’¹³⁵ of these city images and notions of a Western European community. This is not to say that the points of view offered by these images were necessarily or uniformly taken up. What their identification reveals is what was at stake in the image of the city in the popular photographic press of the early 1950s – its symbolic function in relation to broader geopolitical developments and debates. Simon Dell, considering the image of the Popular Front in France before the Second World War, wryly notes that, ‘historians – like viewfinders – tend to exclude more than they embrace’.¹³⁶ Over and above the production history of these magazines and the history of their reception, this analysis of

¹³³ Henry Luce was proprietor of *Life* (launched in 1936), Edward Hulton of *Picture Post* (launched in 1938), Jean Prouvost of *Paris-Match* (launched in 1949) and Axel Springer of the West German tabloid *Bild* (launched in 1952).

¹³⁴ Mayne, p. 82.

¹³⁵ This is a term borrowed from Moritz Föllmer’s discussion of individuality under Nazism: Moritz Föllmer, ‘Was Nazism Collectivistic? Redefining the Individual in Berlin, 1930–1945’, *Journal of Modern History*, 82 (2010), 61–100 (p. 98).

¹³⁶ Simon Dell, *The Image of the Popular Front: The Masses and the Media in Interwar France* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), p. 8.

the illustrated press leaves out much. On the whole, it has looked at the question of positive emotions or pleasures – such as spectacle and escapism, glamour and voyeurism, humanisation, participation and the wondrous urban. But there is a flipside to these largely positive discursive formations also prominent on these pages. Biess argues, “‘Hope’ and ‘fear’ represented different ways for linking past, present, and future. They constituted alternative and competing political perspectives for envisioning the future in the aftermath of the Second World War.”¹³⁷ Emphasis has been placed here largely on the question of hope, but fear also abounds in representations of urban space in the photo-magazines of the first postwar decade – from quotidian threats like the dangers of traffic to school children, and the menacing faces of youth gangs and petty crime, to the image of the mushroom cloud over the imagined space of the city and the bomb shelter under it. Such modes of photography and their representational strategies merit further research. The principal focus here, however, has been the cultural plausibility of a Western European imagined community or identity in a moment of redrawn national alliances resulting from the Cold War, motivated by a key driver of this study – the need to account for the seemingly rapid transition in the postwar years from a destructive enmity to a sense of unity between the comparator nations.

After the early 1950s, the style of the illustrated magazines, their preoccupations and their modes of reporting and picturing began to shift subtly. In the mid- and late 1950s, there was an intensification of commercialism and individualism. The result of this for coverage of urban space was a greater emphasis on tourism, which of course also engaged in questions of identity politics. For instance, a piece in *Paris-Match* showed French tourists in the USSR¹³⁸ or a photo-story in *Quick* showed young German adults holidaying in Paris by caravan (figs. 4.5.1 and 4.5.2).¹³⁹ This period also saw a diminution of the prominence of images of the war’s destruction, which started to play less of a role in the sorts of negotiation of the past examined above. At the time of the ten year anniversary of the capitulation in 1955, the German magazine *Revue: die Weltillustrierte* included a few short pieces on the task of reconstruction and its progress, but this was allotted only modest coverage.¹⁴⁰ Far

¹³⁷ Biess, pp. 30–48 (p. 37).

¹³⁸ ‘800 français chez les Soviets’, *Paris-Match*, 17 September 1955, pp. 30-33.

¹³⁹ Wolfgang Fischer, ‘Unser Hotel fährt 80 Kilometer’, *Quick*, 30 April, 1955, pp. 6-9.

¹⁴⁰ ‘Zehn Jahre danach: Hamburg’, *Revue: Die Weltillustrierte*, 7 May 1955, pp. 6-7; ‘Köln: Zehn Jahre danach’, *Revue: Die Weltillustrierte*, 14 May 1955, pp. 14-15. The latter included a tripartite set of images, from before the war, after and in 1955.

more attention was given in the anniversary year to a serialised and authorised biography of Konrad Adenauer, illustrated with photographs by Benno Wundshammer – an attempt through verbal profile and photographic portraiture to reframe the image of the nation outside associations of Nazism and its legacy; to look forward rather than back. Beginning in the April, the weekly instalments continued well into the summer.¹⁴¹ By the 1960s, the illustrated press displayed another shift in style and emphasis. With longer articles, more extensive use of colour, and fewer images given more space on the page, these publications resembled the British Sunday colour supplements, like that of *The Sunday Times* launched in 1962. Most noticeable by this time, there was a much less explicit emphasis on the photograph *qua photograph*. That is, the medium was not foregrounded in the way it had been a few years earlier when photographs, photography and photographers constituted report-worthy events or stories in their own right. In a manner of speaking, for the illustrated press of the early 1960s, photography had by and large become naturalised: seeing the world through these dynamic combinations of text and image had become an everyday phenomenon, refined to the point where the medium which facilitated the experience no longer demanded explanation, justification or promotion. Referring to ‘modern versions of the rhetoric’ of the illustrated press in 1972, Hall wrote about being ‘invited *into* the picture’ and ‘the total integration of text and picture.’¹⁴² It is at this point that the illustrated press had arrived by the early 1960s – a point where, as Barthes suggested, we no longer see the photograph.¹⁴³

Prior to these shifts of the later 1950s and early 1960s, the illustrated magazines of the three comparator countries constituted an important forum in a moment of geopolitical transition. To summarize this, we can consider no better photographic subject than the Eiffel Tower as it appeared in three different publications from the three countries. A photo-story in *Picture Post* in August 1951 featured a photo from the top of the Tower by Lucien Hervé, alongside four photographs by Jean Mangeot of the Tower’s shadow sweeping across the network of streets below.¹⁴⁴ The

¹⁴¹ *Revue: Die Weltillustrierte*, 30 April 1955, pp. 13-18 & 36-37. The serialised biography continued into the summer, appearing in nine weekly instalments.

¹⁴² Stuart Hall, 71–120 (p. 79).

¹⁴³ ‘Whatever it grants to vision and whatever its manner, a photograph is always invisible: it is not it that we see’ (Roland Barthes, *Camera Lucida: Reflections on Photography*, trans. by Richard Howard (London: Vintage, 1993), p. 6).

¹⁴⁴ ‘Take Your Time from the Eiffel Tower’, *Picture Post*, 18 August 1951, pp. 43-45. Instantiating Nora’s comments above, these images also appeared in France (‘L’Ombre de la Tour Eiffel Donne l’Heure aux Parisiens’, *Paris-Match*, 28 July 1951, pp. 18-19).

architectural icon was transfigured, through the collaboration between image and text, into another example of the wondrous urban. The photographs, the caption asserted, offered a 'new view' of the Eiffel Tower: 'Paris' famous landmark is (among other things) the world's biggest sundial. Its moving shadow is the inexorable finger of Time: it paints the hour on the face of the city'. The pleasures of transfiguration, the face of the city, the seemingly ineluctable and indissoluble relation of the city to its image – all these common strategies of the photography of urban space served to offer up the city as a commodity to be consumed and enjoyed. The previous month (the month of 'le Bi'), *Point de vue – Images du monde* published a dozen images of the Tower by Hervé, including the photograph taken from the top published in *Picture Post* (figs. 4.5.3 and 4.5.4).¹⁴⁵ The text that accompanied Hervé's images urged the audience to actively look at the iconic building, noting how such structures have a tendency to become invisible: 'we see it everywhere, but we never see it.'¹⁴⁶ The images themselves – being close-ups and multiple-exposures, or using dramatic compositions and reflections – effect a transfiguration of the Tower into yet another example of the wondrous urban. Most noteworthy, however, is the title: 'Rehabilitation of the Eiffel Tower'. The precise nature of this rehabilitation is left implicit, but while such a reference might have had little currency for British audiences, it would not have been lost on French spectators: during the occupation, the Tower displayed the words 'Germany is victorious on all fronts' ('Deutschland siegt auf allen Fronten'). The role of this architectural icon in the war is referenced directly in the German press in the same year. Adenauer's visit to Paris in 1951 at the time of the Treaty of Paris was covered by *Neue Münchner Illustrierte*.¹⁴⁷ The article finishes with a photograph by Hannes Betzler taken in front of the Eiffel Tower (fig. 4.5.5). Adenauer is pictured in sombre attire with ambassador André François-Poncet in front of the tower. The caption reads: 'Do you recall another image with the same background? At that time, a megalomaniacal conqueror visited Paris. Now comes a German chancellor, who continues Stresemann's work towards peace – the work of European understanding. Schuman Plan or not, the real Europe began with a conversation.'¹⁴⁸ The image of Adenauer, in

¹⁴⁵ Lucien Hervé, 'Réhabilitation de la Tour Eiffel', *Point de vue – Image du monde*, 19 July 1951, pp. 29-31.

¹⁴⁶ 'L'apercevoir de partout et de jamais la voir' (Hervé, p. 30).

¹⁴⁷ 'Vorfrühling und Verständigung', *Neue Münchner Illustrierte*, 28 April 1951, pp. 6-7.

¹⁴⁸ 'Erinnert man sich an anderes Bild mit dem gleichen Hintergrund? Damals besuchte Paris ein größenwahnsinniger Eroberer. Jetzt kam ein deutscher Kanzler, der das Friedenswerk Stresemanns, das Werk der Europäischen Verständigung, fortsetzt. Schuman-Plan oder nicht: das wahre Europa began ein Gespräch' ('Vorfrühling und Verständigung', p. 7).

explicit dialogue with another image, offers both an overwriting of the past and a re-inscription of the meaning of the architectural icon for the future. Notably this attempted revision of associations is performed through a humanising act, the picture relating international politics to a conversation between individuals.

These three different photo-stories illuminate the process of forming city images in the photographic press of the time. It was dialogic, responding to previous images (be they wartime images or templates of urban imagery from the interwar period). It foregrounded the role of photography and the importance of vision. It focused on iconic urban space (be it that of the German ruins or the Eiffel Tower). It often humanised through the depictions of individuals or the metaphor of the face, extending the invitation to audiences to identify with these representations. Finally, the city images were themselves tied in to wider political and ideological developments. In 'Myth Today', Barthes discusses the photograph of a black soldier:

I am in the barber's, and a copy of *Paris-Match* is offered to me. On the cover, a young Negro in a French uniform is saluting, with his eyes uplifted, probably fixed on the fold of the tricolour. All this is the *meaning* of the picture. But, whether naively or not, I see very well what it signifies to me: that France is a great empire, that all her sons, without any colour discrimination, faithfully serve under her flag, and that there is no better answer to the detractors of an alleged colonialism than the zeal showed by this Negro in serving his so-called oppressors.¹⁴⁹

In addition to the anecdote of an exchange exemplifying the circulation of these magazines and underlining their role in social relations, Barthes' analysis tackles the manner in which such representations become freighted with mythic significance over and above the specificity of the scene or the individuality of the subject depicted (what Barthes calls its 'meaning'). The image is instrumentalised in such a way that the soldier's individuality is superseded by the symbolic value of his image. In Barthes words, his biography is placed 'in parentheses'; his presence is 'tamed, put at a distance, made almost transparent'.¹⁵⁰ In pinpointing the manner in which 'history [or

¹⁴⁹ Roland Barthes, 'Myth Today', in *Ideology*, ed. by Terry Eagleton (Harlow: Longman, 1994), p. 166.

¹⁵⁰ Barthes, 'Myth Today', pp. 167–168.

specificity...] drains out of the form',¹⁵¹ Barthes identifies the central process of city images as they circulated in the photographic magazines of the time. These representations worked to empty the face of the city of its wartime history and assert new symbolic values for city images in the postwar moment. The various representations of the Eiffel Tower (itself an empty or hollow form, like the Skylon and the ruined façades of West Germany) provide excellent examples of this process. As Barthes noted elsewhere, the Tower 'attracts meaning, the way a lightning rod attracts thunder bolts'.¹⁵²

The image of the city was at the forefront of quotidian experience of the Cold War and in these weekly and fortnightly photography magazines the images of Berlin, Paris and London and other cities are constantly asserted, contested and re-asserted. The pleasures offered to consumers of such magazines – voyeurism, identification, transfiguration, escapism – served to recruit people to ways of viewing the city. Over and above this they were also encouraged to go out and capture the city themselves. Photography was integral in this entangled process of city image and imagined community creation in the urban centres of Western Europe. Whether through the representation of London and the spectacle of the Coronation, of Paris and the voyeurism of fashion, or of Berlin and the network of invitations to the audience to identify with or deny identification – or indeed the depictions of the wondrous urban and the promotion of the active spectatorship of amateur photography – a dynamic juxtaposition of faces and places runs throughout the pages of these photo-magazines. It is present in the German reporting of Adenauer's Paris visit in Germany as much as a simple advert for Ilford film in Britain (fig. 4.5.6). Photography was thus intertwined with the prominence of this notion of a Western European community in the early postwar years through the transnational circulation of urban imagery which the medium facilitated. The destruction of urban space and the attendant disruption of everyday life had been a prominent facet of wartime experience in the three comparator countries. Circulation of ruin imagery in photobooks was one example of how such destruction was instrumentalised in the immediate postwar years to address the challenges of national recovery and reconciliation, with local damage being frequently appropriated as a national loss through ruin imagery in France for instance, or a retreat from nationalism into localism in the *wie es war* nostalgia of Germany. This ruin imagery was

¹⁵¹ Barthes, 'Myth Today', p. 168.

¹⁵² Roland Barthes, 'The Eiffel Tower', in *A Roland Barthes Reader*, ed. by Susan Sontag (London: Vintage, 2000), pp. 236–250.

also threaded through the promotion of modernist architecture as *the* style for rebuilding and re-housing the three postwar nations, helping craft the positive image of the International Style in the postwar decades. In the illustrated press of the postwar period, as exemplified above, the photographic representation of urban space was fertile ground for cultivating a sense of a common cultural identity through the promotion of common pleasures, through identification or through the promotion of active engagement by audiences in photographing urban space. Urban imagery in magazines like *Illustrated*, *Point de vue* and *Neue Illustrierte* thus performed a managed turning from the past towards the future – a dynamic explored in greater detail in the next chapter vis-à-vis the early work of UNESCO. In doing so, such image-over-text publications promoted the conception and consumption of the city as a visual artefact.

The argument of this chapter has not been to suggest that urban photography alone accounts for the creation of a transnational, Western European identity in the early 1950s. Nor that such a sense of community occurs spontaneously and without precedent in the postwar period. It involves intersecting vectors of change which include but are not exhausted by social, political, economic, geographic and psychological factors. But culture – mediating and communicating these factors – plays a crucial role. Moreover, in the cultures of the three comparator nations at this time, photography is a particularly pertinent player. The role of the photographic press is an important thread in the tapestry of factors which worked to constitute such a postwar Western European identity – an identity which, as David Seymour said in 1956 of the work of Magnum photographers, possesses ‘some unity, difficult to define, but still existing’.¹⁵³

Richard Bessel and Dirk Schumann have suggested that the 1950s constitute for many ‘a remarkable image of a golden age of stability and normality’.¹⁵⁴ This notion of the *image* of a golden age highlights the role of vision and visual culture in the period and the importance of visuality to historical accounts of the postwar recovery. In this chapter, it has been argued that urban photography in the illustrated press and the visual pleasures it offered worked to recruit viewers to a sense of a community of Western European nations. This imagery both negotiated cultural memory of the past

¹⁵³ Cited in *Magnum's First*, ed. by Achim Heine, Peter Coeln and Andréa Holzherr (Ostfildern: Hatje Cantz, 2008), p. 16.

¹⁵⁴ Schumann and Bessel, p. 13.

war – that is, the associations of city space with death and destruction – and sought to envisage a bright future, all the while influenced by the present tensions of the Cold War. The concerted effort to exorcise the city spaces haunted by the past war gave rise to the assertion of new city images. It is the force of this dynamic, iconoclastic cultural practice and the agency of the photograph that must in part account for this lingering ‘image of a golden age’ – a compelling vision which in Britain today, for instance, gives rise to a nostalgia for the Festival of Britain and calls to rebuild the Skylon. In the next chapter the mobilisation of urban photography to address an international community will be examined through the publications of UNESCO and their invocations of a shared humanity, culture and future.

Chapter 5: At the Crossroads of Cultural Memory and Utopian Thinking: Photography, Architecture and UNESCO, 1949-58

Jean Roubier, who photographed the ruins of Normandy and Alsace, was Vice President of the Salon de la Photographie in the early 1950s. Writing in the amateur-photography magazine *Photo-Cinéma*, he advised potential entrants on what the judges were looking for. Illustrated by four melancholy street scenes (one by Lucien Hervé, fig. 5.1, and one of the Coronation by Izis, fig. 5.2), the article recommends avoiding gimmickry and focusing instead on the affective capacity of the image: 'Lack of emotion. That is the general criticism that I would make about the submissions'.¹ Roubier goes on to assert his conception of photography in the light of this advice: 'Photography is not simply a distraction, a pleasurable skill or a way to capture memories [...] it is the means of expression of the modern world'.² His comments encouraging the participation of amateurs in the putatively democratic medium of photography reflect a widely held view in 1950s Western Europe – the capacity of photography to act as a 'universal language' in a world of nations perceived as becoming more rapidly and profusely connected. This chapter will excavate the idea of photography's universality and its significance in the field of postwar international relations through the publications of one organisation that sought to operate on a global stage – the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO).

The preamble to UNESCO's constitution, signed on 16 November 1945, asserted that, 'since wars begin in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that the defences of peace must be constructed'.³ UNESCO resulted from the wartime

¹ 'Manque d'émotion. Voilà le grand reproche que je ferais à l'ensemble des envois' (Jean Roubier, 'L'Opinion d'un membre du jury', *Photo-Cinéma*, 624 (1953), 184-189 (p. 188)).

² 'La photographie n'est pas seulement une distraction, un art d'agrément ou un moyen de fixer des souvenirs [...] elle est le *moyen d'expression* du monde contemporain' (Roubier, p. 188).

³ (UNESCO, 'Constitution of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization', 1945, p. 7 <<http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0013/001337/133729e.pdf>> [accessed 22 July 2009]. The organisation officially came into being on the 4 November 1946, as required by the constitution, following the ratification of the constitution by the twentieth member state. The first twenty members were Britain, New Zealand, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Australia, India, Mexico, France, Dominican Republic, Turkey, Egypt, Norway, Canada, China, Denmark, United States of America, Czechoslovakia, Brazil, Lebanon and Greece. The Federal Republic of Germany became a member in July 1951.

Conference of Allied Ministers of Education which first met on 16 November 1942.⁴ Replacing the International Institute of Intellectual Cooperation and the International Bureau of Education, UNESCO's more broadly defined purpose was 'advancing, through the educational and scientific and cultural relations of the peoples of the world, the objectives of international peace and of the common welfare of mankind'. Based in Paris, the organisation operated first from temporary facilities in the Hôtel Majestic on the Champs-Élysées and later from a purpose-built, modernist headquarters on the Place de Fontenoy. In the years preceding the creation of the striking new building, UNESCO pursued its stated commitment to harmonious international relations based on dialogue and mutual understanding in two principal ways. Firstly, it fulfilled a clearing house function, collating and disseminating information on subjects within its remit, and hosting or promoting dialogue between professionals, intellectuals and academics of different nations through seminars and conferences. Secondly, it had a standard- or norm-setting function, developing various agreements or instruments to facilitate international standards within the fields of expertise relevant to the organisation.⁵ In the early years, UNESCO thus represented a concerted effort to shape what Glenda Sluga has termed 'a newly constituted and self-consciously international public sphere'.⁶ Photography played a formative part in both the conception and pursuit of this effort.

Operating on an international stage, concerned with intercultural exchange and understanding, UNESCO was a purposeful effort to shape attitudes in response to the death and destruction of the Second World War.⁷ In its efforts to forge this international

⁴ The meeting was attended by Ministers of Education (or their representatives) from Belgium, Czechoslovakia, Greece, Holland, Norway, Poland, Yugoslavia, Britain and the Commissioner of Justice and Education for de Gaulle's Free French Committee.

⁵ UNESCO uses a number of instruments in pursuit of these functions: conventions ('legally binding treaties'), recommendations ('invitations for member states to take particular courses of action') and declarations ('moral suasions or imperatives on important matters'), (J. P. Singh, *United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO): Creating Norms for a Complex World* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2011), pp. 20–22).

⁶ Glenda Sluga, 'UNESCO and the (One) World of Julian Huxley', *Journal of World History*, 21 (2010), 393–418 (p. 394).

⁷ The words of the preamble forcefully convey the manner in which the organisation's establishment was a direct reaction to the Second World War, albeit this new international forum had prewar precedents. This direct connection is made by contemporary commentators both sympathetic to UNESCO and unsympathetic. In the words of Herbert Read, it was 'as an immediate consequence of the war' (Herbert Read, *Education for Peace* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1950), p. 45). Julian Huxley said of the Conference of Allied Ministers of Education that it was 'a reaction against the glare of the bombs falling on London' (Julian Huxley and Jaime Torres Bodet, *This Is Our Power* (Zurich: Berichthaus, 1949), p. 5).

public sphere, the organisation drew heavily on photography as a means to communicate and achieve its objectives; reflecting explicitly on the medium, its capacities and its function in the process. This interest in the medium, as well as the message, was enshrined in Article I of the constitution which stated that UNESCO would:

[...] collaborate in the work of advancing the mutual knowledge and understanding of peoples, through all means of mass communication and to that end recommend such international agreements as may be necessary to promote the free flow of ideas by word and image.⁸

The task was peace; the means, international understanding; the challenge, communication. Within this framework, photography was mobilised as an important tool in the available arsenal of media (or 'mass communications') which UNESCO could draw on. In addition to the constitutional commitment to the circulation of photography, the work of UNESCO also engaged directly with questions of destruction and reconstruction of urban space, making it centrally relevant to this study. Relating to the sorts of destruction depicted in the ruin photobooks examined in chapter two, for instance, UNESCO sought to limit the possibilities of future war damage through initiatives like 'The Hague Convention on the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict' (1954). Regarding reconstruction, for example, UNESCO engaged in the demanding task of rebuilding education systems in many postwar nations. The construction of the headquarters on a site in central Paris can be viewed as part of the ongoing cycle of destruction and construction of urban spaces which – as discussed in chapter three – came to be associated with the rubric of postwar reconstruction, as it merged with the ongoing project of urban renewal. Thus, photography of urban space and architecture had a particular prominence in the official publications UNESCO circulated in the public domain, making the organisation and its utopian vision an essential element of this comparative and transnational cultural history.

Jay Winter argues that 'utopia is a discourse in two contradictory parts'.⁹ On the one hand, utopias are about a break from the present. On the other, they are expressed at a particular historical moment and are consequently bound up with

⁸ UNESCO, p. 8.

⁹ Winter, p. 3.

'contemporary conditions and language'.¹⁰ However, it is not simply contemporary conditions and language that are important, but also visual culture. A striking comment from Wendell Willkie's bestseller, *One World* (1943), makes clear the role visuality plays in the postwar discourse of internationalism:

Continents and oceans are plainly only parts of a whole, *seen as I have seen them, from the air*. England and America are parts; Russia and China, Egypt, Syria and Turkey, Iraq and Iran are also parts. And it is inescapable that there can be no peace for any part of the world unless the foundations of peace are made secure through all parts of the world.¹¹

The utopianism of postwar internationalism was conceived and articulated in the historically conditioned culture of Western Europe and the United States in the 1940s and 1950s; a culture saturated with visual material, for which photography was a dominant mode of representation. The aerial photograph, the photographic archive of works of art, photojournalism of conflict, architectural photography of reconstruction work – all these widely-circulating modes of image-making and their related strategies of representation helped constitute that contemporary visual culture. The stance of Willkie's book (and that of other advocates of internationalism) was very much an 'internationalist perspective'; it emphasised particular ways of looking at postwar problems and politics. UNESCO too, as demonstrated in its official publications, did not simply employ visual material. It both played on visual metaphors and was animated by particular ways of visualising the global stage on which it sought to operate.¹² Postwar conceptions of internationalism thus entailed a slippage between the circulation and viewing of visual material and visual metaphors, such as the notion of 'a window on the world' to be analysed later. Within the 'internationalist perspective' – as in the

¹⁰ Winter, p. 3.

¹¹ Willkie, addressing a primarily American audience, argued against the isolationism which characterised the American response to the economic turmoil of the interwar period. In its place, he advocated 'peace be planned on a world basis'. Seeking to demonstrate the merits of this argument he took a round-the-world trip by aeroplane, meeting leaders and citizens in the Allied countries. The above image comes from the travelogue's closing arguments in support of the 'one world' ideal (Wendell L. Willkie, *One World* (London: Cassell, 1943), p. 166).

¹² A British Ministry of Education pamphlet offers another example of visuality penetrating the discourse of internationalism. Seeking to create a sense of historic significance regarding the efforts of the international community in the postwar moment, the author states 'our generations are like the tiny dots that make up a photographic reproduction, and we ourselves cannot stand back to see the whole picture' (*UNESCO and a World Society* (London: HMSO, 1948), p. 7).

vocabulary of visuality in photographically illustrated postwar architectural debate and the notion of the 'face of the city' recurring in photo-magazines of the period – visuality suffused representations of and ways of thinking about pertinent postwar problems.

This chapter considers the interaction of various differing and overlapping conceptions of internationalism in UNESCO's early campaigns and the manner in which they are connected to the notion of photography as a universal language. It is therefore worth briefly reflecting on the terms 'internationalism' and 'universalism'. Internationalism is not a stable or simple concept. In this context, it implies a belief in the merits of organising international cooperation to address issues deemed relevant or pressing for human welfare and the international community as a whole. In a sense, it is a circular definition, since a commitment to cooperation assumes a belief in the notion of an international community. What is at issue in the different approaches to postwar internationalism is what constitutes this international community. The charter of the United Nations can be read as a commitment to internationalism, but, as Mark Mazower has pointed out, what specific form of internationalism is no straightforward matter.¹³ Tracing the contradictions between the terminology of the charter, the ideologies of those involved in establishing the UN, and the politics of its early years, Mazower makes clear the different models of internationalism tied up in the birth of the UN. Internationalism encompassed those who promoted international cooperation as the cooperation between sovereign nation states; those who considered colonialism reconcilable with internationalism through a notion of stewardship of 'weaker' nations by more 'advanced' nations; and those who saw the ultimate goal of world organisation as the establishment of a world government.

Distinct from internationalism is the concept of universalism, which concerns a belief in the universal validity of a particular idea, ideal or action. In principle, it is possible to be committed to international cooperation aimed at improving human welfare without committing to a belief that certain solutions or values have universal validity. A consideration of the relationship between the various integrationist perspectives and the conception of photography as a universal language, however, reveals that in practice internationalism and universalism had a problematic relationship in the early campaigns of UNESCO. Photography was not a universal language; rather, it tended to universalise the ideas or ideals it depicted and circulated.

¹³ Mark Mazower, *No Enchanted Palace: The End of Empire and the Ideological Origins of the United Nations* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009).

In short, it will be argued that, though intended for a global audience, the use of photography in these campaigns exemplified – even prescribed – a set of discernible Euro- or Western-centric preoccupations or ways of picturing and thinking about key issues of the postwar world.

Four specific UNESCO campaigns which sought to shape a postwar international public sphere will be examined. The first section focuses on the question of mass communications and intercultural relations, looking specifically at the discussion of photography at UNESCO and UNESCO-sponsored events and the idea of ‘world understanding’. The relevance of the Cold War (in particular the looming threat of nuclear conflict) to the visual culture of UNESCO publications will be addressed here, along with reflection on what would now be called a blockbuster touring exhibition, *The Family of Man*. The second section concerns UNESCO’s campaign to promote the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, looking at the photography of cultural artefacts and the related notion of ‘world culture’. (It covers representational strategies comparable to those of the ruin photobooks analysed in chapter two). The third section concerns UNESCO’s remit regarding youth and education, focusing on the use of images of children in urban space, how the question of youth was framed as an international concern, and how the representation of individuals in such publications related to the question of ‘world citizenship’. (This discussion relates directly to the humanising vision in the pages of postwar photo-magazines discussed in the previous chapter). The final section concerns the new headquarters building which opened at the end of 1958, considering how architectural photographs of the new building offered a specific public image of the organisation, and how that image related to changing dynamics within UNESCO as the processes of decolonisation led to a larger membership. Comparable to the campaigns which publicised the work and aims of UNESCO in its early years, the headquarters building was a facet of the organisation’s public image and photography of the building thus played its part in the wider task of explaining the organisation to its constituency.

Analysis will consider the manner in which photography was used in UNESCO publications to address, and in doing so constitute, a global audience. There are two central characteristics of the UNESCO project: the idea of a realisable and harmonious future, and a conception of culture and heritage as a key means of founding international identities or imagined communities to bring about this future. These two facets – utopian thinking and cultural memory – instantiate the correlation Koselleck

drew between the space of experience and the horizon of expectation; that is, between the presence of the past and the future made present.¹⁴ Thus, the internationalist ideal represented by UNESCO has a retrospective element which idealises the *longue durée* and a prospective element which looks to a better future. In short, the retrospective appeal of the UNESCO vision is constituted by an appeal based on a shared culture; the prospective, by an appeal based on a shared humanity. This imagined community that photography works to craft in the early UNESCO campaigns is different from the notion of Western European identity which was the subject of chapter four. While the latter transnational imagined community of Western Europe entailed the forging of bonds between specific nations, the internationalism envisaged by the UNESCO project expresses the will to form identities and institutions distinct from nation states and national identities. In other words, the visual culture of UNESCO's early campaigns worked to create an international community of individuals based on a shared past and future; a shared culture and a shared humanity. Through the examination of these campaigns it is thus possible to trace ways in which international relations and the notion of the international community were reconceived and retooled in the Cold War moment to facilitate the inclusion of West Germany along with the other two comparator nations, notwithstanding their radically different wartime experiences and postwar situations.

This distinction between a transnational imagined community (here understood as between nations) and an international or global imagined community (here understood as over and above the nation) suggests the manner in which 'the nation' or nationalism was considered a problem in the postwar period. Yet, as explored in chapter one, the image of the nation in the postwar world was deeply equivocal. Nationalisms were implicated in the outbreak of the Second World War; equally, the Allied victory was associated with individual nations' war efforts and the cooperation between nations of differing histories and political hues. This conflicted position of the nation and national identity is reflected in the tensions and paradoxes in the internationalist perspective articulated in the UNESCO publications of its first decade – a time when arguably the nation state was of growing not diminishing relevance to international politics and relations owing to the Cold War and decolonisation. The image projected of a global community as a community of individuals was much more the expression of a desire or the articulation of an ideological position, than it was a description of a state of affairs. While some individuals commenting on the organisation

¹⁴ Koselleck, pp. 260 & 259.

in the postwar decade, along with some documents emanating from it, may give the impression of a supranational coalition of intellectuals, UNESCO was a member-state organisation.¹⁵ Debates, decisions and funding issues were consequently marked by the rivalries and alliances of the wider arena of international politics. The use and discussion of photography in this decade, in a concerted effort to shape an international public sphere, frequently related back to the sort of utopian ideals articulated in the UNESCO constitution. It is against this backdrop that the photography in UNESCO's early campaigns needs to be understood to explore how, paradoxically, as UNESCO membership grew and seemed to approach an internationalist ideal, the one-world rhetoric was replaced by talk of mutual or intercultural understanding, rather than the overlapping and intersecting internationalisms expressed by concepts such as 'world understanding', 'world culture' or 'world citizenship'.

David Bate has stated that, 'Globalization offers a new paradigm for thinking about photography'.¹⁶ The comparative approach gives way here to a micro-history of the visual culture of an international organisation. In doing so, it provides valuable insights into the discursive formations in which postwar urban photography circulated in the three comparator countries – complementing the national and transnational dimensions already considered. UNESCO in its first decade was an educational initiative, a cultural programme, a diplomatic undertaking and an architectural project. This utopian venture looked to cultural heritage, modern architecture and the image of the individual to form global bonds of community for a peaceful future. Photography held out the promise of a visual culture that could overcome barriers of nation, of language and even illiteracy. The conception of photography as a universal language was particularly suited to communicating and furthering the ends of the organisation, offering an image of the human family, with a shared heritage, and a common future. However, such an instrumentalisation of photography was not ideologically innocent. Emerging from a period of political and personal turmoil defined by the First and Second World Wars, into the tensions of the Cold War and the violent bloody conflicts of decolonisation, the manner in which Europe was presented in international debates as the birthplace and long-time home of democracy is conspicuous, to say the least. This chapter will analyse how the campaigning work of UNESCO in its early years was underpinned by what Mazower has termed 'a sense of European civilizational

¹⁵ Huxley goes as far as to describe public intellectuals as 'these citizens of the One World of the human mind' (Huxley and Bodet, p. 10).

¹⁶ David Bate, *Photography: The Key Concepts* (Oxford: Berg, 2009), p. 147.

superiority'.¹⁷ Examining a number of different verbal and visual means by which the UNESCO project was articulated and promoted on a global stage, this chapter excavates the problematic relationship between internationalist perspectives and universality which underpinned the instrumentalisation of urban photography and the manner of its address to audiences in the immediate postwar period.

¹⁷ Mazower, *Dark Continent*, p. xiv.

5.1 *The Mirror and the Window: Mass Communications and World Understanding*

UNESCO engaged, continually and from the start, in debates about the means of communication best suited to meeting its constitutional aims. The connections between conflict, public attitudes and culture – particularly visual culture – were at the forefront of debate regarding securing the peace, as noted in the first histories of the organisation. Walter Laves and Charles Thomson suggested both UNESCO's constitutional commitment to and its consistent concern with questions of 'mass communication' was a continuation of wartime public information campaigns.¹⁸ Media like radio, the press and later television were central to the objectives of UNESCO, offering the opportunity to overcome barriers of nation, language and even illiteracy.¹⁹ A sustained engagement with questions of media and communication resulted in explicit debates and commentaries on the nature and utility of photography. These debates and commentaries provide an opportunity to reflect on the perceived role of the medium in international relations in the postwar decade, scrutinising the notion of photography as a universal language and what was meant by the promotion of 'world understanding'. In short, the project of world understanding, through its associations with photography, came to refer to a monolithic phenomenon – a new way of looking – which needed to be actively pursued and created. It was not simply the extension of piecemeal understanding of one nation by its neighbours. It was a total comprehension of the world by the world in which photography was deeply implicated.²⁰

¹⁸ 'During World War II authoritarian as well as democratic countries relied so extensively on the mass media of public persuasion that delegates to the San Francisco and London Conferences looked almost automatically to these media as aids in building the peace' (Walter Laves and Charles Thomson, *UNESCO: Purpose, Progress, Prospects* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1957), p. 116). The perception of the term, 'mass communications', was not uniformly positive in the years immediately following the war. For instance, of the reference to 'mass communication' in the first article of the constitution, Theodore Besterman commented that it was a 'disagreeable and misleading expression' – presumably because it smacked of propaganda, rather than diplomacy (Theodore Besterman, *UNESCO: Peace in the Minds of Men* (London: Methuen, 1951), p. 10). Regardless of disagreements over terminology, the mass media was viewed as a self-evidently central aspect of fighting war and securing peace.

¹⁹ For instance, the 'UNESCO World Review' was a radio programme produced in English, French & Spanish and broadcast in forty countries by 1951 (Besterman, p. 89). However, by 1955 it had been subsumed into UNESCO's regular publication of press releases, *UNESCO Features* – an initiative which distributed 37,000 UNESCO photos that year (Fernando Valderrama, *A History of UNESCO* (Paris: UNESCO, 1995), p. 107).

²⁰ It should be noted that, while UNESCO's debates about mass communications offer insights into dominant ways of thinking about photography in the period, these insights are also limited exactly because of the manner in which photography was conceived. Photography was held to be a powerful medium through which to pursue the ends of UNESCO or other internationalist projects. At the same time it was felt to be an unproblematic and transparent medium. For

A few examples of the terms in which photography was discussed give a striking insight into how the medium was conceived in the context of postwar international relations. In 1950, Leigh Ashton, then Director of the Victoria and Albert Museum, wrote a preface to UNESCO's bilingual *Répertoire international des archives photographiques d'œuvres d'art* (1950), in which he argued for the photograph as a neutral and transparent medium of value to scholars and students. Ashton described the photographic reproduction of works of art as, 'the guide and counsellor of all study', able to speak with 'an International Voice' and 'act as an Ambassador [...] where no original material exists'.²¹ In 1955, the French National Commission to UNESCO hosted an international colloquium on photography in Paris. Delegates from museums and organisations around the world debated the role of photography in contemporary life and recommended the establishment of Le Centre International de la Photographie (fixe et animée). In 1956, UNESCO published a special edition of its monthly magazine to mark the Parisian leg of *The Family of Man* exhibition tour. The editorial remarked, 'Today photographs are everywhere around us. [...] photography has helped to enrich our lives, [...] it has given us a new vision of the world, [...] it speaks a universal language.'²²

These three characterisations of the medium – an ambassadorial role, an international centre for photography, a universal language – all highlight the extent to which photography was deemed relevant to postwar cultural diplomacy and the idea of promoting 'world understanding' or 'la compréhension internationale'. Ashton's comment on the 'International Voice' of photography and its ambassadorial potential neatly tie a diplomatic metaphor with the study of culture. The editorial gives

instance, in a trilingual preface to a special edition of the French photo-magazine *Photo-Monde*, the Under Secretary of the UN, Ahmed Bokhári, proclaimed: 'Photographs do not need translation. They cross barriers of language and illiteracy to bring their message to people everywhere' ('La communauté humaine: Album Spécial du 10e Anniversaire des Nations Unies', *Photo-Monde*, 49-50 (1955)). This insistence on photography's accessibility meant that the medium often receded into the background. Conceived most often as a straight-forward mechanical reproduction of the world, photography was at once the most heavily used of the tools of mass communication by UNESCO and the least commented on. Film, television, radio and the press all received far greater commentary. Notwithstanding the disparity of explicit reflection relative to other media, a survey and critique of the dominant conception of photography exhibited in UNESCO's debate and discussion of the medium is valuable since it reveals influential ways of thinking about the medium tied up with an internationalist perspective in the postwar period. The title of the magazine (*Photo-World*) is a spur to considering UNESCO's explicit reflection on this ubiquitous medium, suggesting as it does not simply the world of photography but a world *constituted out of photographs*.

²¹ Leigh Ashton, *Répertoire international des archives photographiques d'œuvres d'art* (Paris: Dunod, 1950), p. ix.

²² *UNESCO Courier*, 2 (1956), p. 3.

expression to the idea that photography can change ways of seeing and thus thinking about the world ('a new vision'). The mooted international centre for photography, though never realised, was equally founded in a belief in the ability of photography to communicate across boundaries of language and nation. Moreover, all three suggest that the nature of cultural diplomacy in the postwar period was influenced by this conception of photography. The role of visual culture in the public information material produced by all sides in the Second World War revealed a faith in the potency of images, which in turn brought mass communications up the agenda in relation to peace in the postwar decade. Photography did not simply offer itself as an available means to meet the ends of an independently-conceived internationalist agenda; the conception of photography as a universal language or international voice was integral to the conception and articulation of an internationalist agenda. The notions of universal language and international voice contain the very dilemma that photography could address – there was neither a universal language nor international voice. It was thus felt that the very visibility of photography (and media derived from this technology, like film and television) enabled it to *overcome* the shortcomings of communication in text or the spoken word. Photography circumvented translation. The conception of what photography was (a universal language) and of what cultural diplomacy could achieve (world understanding) dovetailed perfectly. The medium of communication helped shape what was deemed capable of being communicated.

The establishment of UNESCO did not inaugurate discussion of world understanding, of course. Previous efforts had construed the problem of peace as a problem of understanding hindered by differences of language and of culture. UNESCO held the bishop and philosopher John Amos Comenius (1592-1670), to be one of the organisation's intellectual forefathers, and celebrated him as an 'apostle of modern education and world understanding' in 1957, the 300th anniversary of the publication of the *Didactica Opera Omnia*.²³ Esperanto, devised by Ludwig Lazar Zamenhof in the late nineteenth century, was conceived as a universal language in the service of peace and understanding.²⁴ The artist Hendrik Christian Andersen and the architect Ernest M. Hébrard offered an architectural solution at the start of the twentieth

²³ Marie-Madeleine Rabecq, 'Comenius: Apostle of Modern Education and World Understanding', *UNESCO Courier*, 11 (1957), 4-15. The role of vision and visibility in Comenius' ideas are highlighted in this article, including his development of a pictorial textbook and his proposal for an international organisation promoting the benefits of education named, The Council of Light.

²⁴ Esperanto was recognised by UNESCO in 1954.

century in a bilingual treatise on the creation of a new monumental world city, housing the best of culture and bringing out the best in man.²⁵ What is more, photography's use in the promotion of a one-world vision predates Willkie's use of the term. For instance, the French banker, Albert Kahn, commissioned photographers to travel the world and produce documentation for his *Archives de la planète*.²⁶ Carried out between 1909 and 1931, it eventually consisted of 180,000m of black and white film and 72,000 colour plates. However, what differentiated the postwar effort towards world understanding at UNESCO from previous initiatives was that the global possibilities of promoting such an idea greatly increased with the ease of reproduction and circulation of words and image through mass communications. Photography played its part in this and, arguably, underwent one of the greatest transformations through technological developments in image-making, communication and printing.²⁷ Separated from the material notion of a centre or archive, unburdened of the difficulties of national languages, photography was able to circulate widely in the photographic press and other publishing formats. Such possibilities inspired and altered the pursuit of world understanding to an unprecedented extent, giving a particular character to postwar world understanding which was intimately shot through with questions of vision and visibility. An example of this is UNESCO's own magazine, the *UNESCO Courier*.

Originally a newsletter in a newspaper format summarizing UNESCO's work, *Courier* underwent a number of early refinements following its first appearance in 1948. In 1952, a change in editorial policy saw it move from catering to a general audience, to focusing specifically on teachers and ambiguously on 'leaders of public opinion'. In 1954, it was refashioned and re-launched in a magazine format (which it still maintains today), closely resembling the successful photography magazines of the time. By October 1955, two years following its re-launch and four years since the editorial policy change, the magazine was on sale in 100 countries and had a total circulation of 21,000 – up from just 8,000 in 1953. By December 1956, *Courier* had a circulation of over 70,000.²⁸ As well as news on the work of UNESCO, it included coverage of topics

²⁵ Hendrik Christian Andersen and Ernest M. Hébrard, *Création d'un centre mondial de communication* (Paris: Imprimerie de P. Renouard, 1913).

²⁶ Paula Amad, *Counter-Archive: Film, the Everyday, and Albert Kahn's Archives De La Planète* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2010).

²⁷ Also notable, is the transformation from film to television – a subject in which UNESCO became increasingly interested during the 1950s.

²⁸ ('*The UNESCO Courier*: Item 8.4.5 of Provisional Agenda [for 8th UNESCO General Conference]', 6 October 1954, <<http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0016/001607/160798eb.pdf>> [accessed 2 May 2011]; Laves and Thomson, p. 118). Additionally, Valderrama reports that by

that could be used in the classroom. For instance, a special edition on human rights was distributed to 150,000 teachers in member states in 1953. Like the photo-magazines it emulated, it is not possible to judge how widely any one copy circulated, particularly as the target audience was those considered likely to disseminate its contents to a wider audience.

Without aiming to downplay the role of the text of the magazine, it is important to note the change of format, the mushrooming circulation figures and what this reveals about the role of photography in UNESCO's early work and postwar cultural diplomacy. Not only did the shift in format result in a marked increase in circulation, but the manner in which *Courier* was presented to its global audience exemplifies UNESCO's strategy of achieving world understanding through mass communications. The editorial to the first magazine-format edition in January 1954 stated:

In its contents the *Courier* will continue to remain faithful to its set goal: to serve as a window opening on the world of education, science and culture through which the schoolteacher in particular – for whom this publication is primarily conceived and prepared – and other readers in general can look out on to wide global horizons.²⁹

The articulation of questions of international relations and peace in visual terms carries the implication that if one views the world from the 'right perspective', the rectitude of international cooperation attains a self-evident or natural character. Willkie made the same point in his allusion to the view from the air. It is restated here in the figure of the 'window on the world' and the reference to 'wide global horizons'. Photography was held to offer both transparency and a universally comprehensible means of expression. The medium was central not only in facilitating such a correct perspective (in showing the world), but in shaping the articulation of the question of peace in such strikingly visual terms (in suggesting that seeing the world amounts to understanding). Such

1960 sales exceeded a combined figure of 100,000 copies in the three language editions of English, French and Spanish with an additional 20,000 copies of the Russian language edition also being sold. In 1960, German and Arabic editions were launched and in December of that year there was a combined print run of all six languages editions of 261,750 (Valderrama, pp. 118 & 133).

²⁹ (*UNESCO Courier*, 1 (1954), p. 2). There is a parallel with the photographic magazines of the period, many of which employed similar strap-lines or had regular sections with titles that claimed to offer readers the world through photography. This parallel is indicative of the touristic and voyeuristic gaze photography promoted from which postwar cultural diplomacy was not immune.

visualisations were deemed part of the task set by UNESCO's constitution which officially recognised media as being at the forefront of international politics, of constructing the defences of peace in the minds of men.³⁰ The 'universal language' of photography was not the only means of expression in the field of international relations and the promotion of peace, as evidenced by the rate of growth of the languages *Courier* was published in.³¹ Yet, visibility – both visual metaphors, like the 'window on the world', and photographs themselves – were threaded through the project of securing peace by world understanding. In turn, world understanding came not only to be defined in visual terms, but to be thought of as something that could be achieved through vision; through facilitating the 'right way' of looking at the world and its problems.

Serial UNESCO publications like *Courier*, as well as one-off pamphlets or books, thus were informed by a discursive formation that united photography, vision and peace. *The Family of Man* exhibition is one of the most widely discussed events in the history of postwar photography. Consideration of this iconic exhibition can help excavate what the idea of 'world understanding' implied in this discursive formation. Curated by Edward Steichen and consisting of 503 photographs, from 68 countries, by 273 different people, *The Family of Man* opened at the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA), New York, in 1955.³² Following a successful installation at MoMA, the exhibition was taken up by the United States Information Agency (USIA) as a valuable 'commodity in the cultural diplomacy of the postwar period' and toured the world.³³ Five replicas of the original exhibition visited 91 venues in 38 countries and were seen by over 9 million people, beginning in Berlin, Munich and Paris.³⁴

³⁰ The notion of photography's agency was thus well understood by those who drafted UNESCO's constitution and designed its publications, even if it is often rejected or ignored by twenty-first century historians.

³¹ The first magazine issue of *Courier* focused on language in detail under the explicit theme, 'Languages: Bridge or Barrier?' (*UNESCO Courier*, 1 (1954), p. 3).

³² (Museum of Modern Art, *The Family of Man* (New York: Maco Magazine Corporation, 1955), p. 3). The selected images drew heavily on the photography circulating in magazines of the preceding decades. Steichen's assistant reviewed around 6.5 million images from the pages of photographic magazines, especially *Life*. This relation with photo-magazines was also seen in the production of magazine format previews to promote the exhibition in a given town or city ahead of its opening.

³³ Eric J Sandeen, *Picturing an Exhibition: The Family of Man and 1950s America* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1995), p. 85.

³⁴ Sandeen, 'The International Reception of The Family of Man', pp. 345 & 352.

While the exhibition is often discussed in histories of photography as the most salient example of the conception of photography as a universal means of communication, it had many important precedents and contemporaries. These comparable publications and exhibitions involved many of the same photographers whom Steichen visited during his 1953 research trip to Europe and whose work was first printed in the photo-magazines reviewed by his assistant, Wayne Miller, in preparing the exhibition. Eric Sandeen has written the 'biography' of this exhibition, including an account of its genesis and its journey. He describes one precedent: 'People are People the World Over', a series of photo-stories by Magnum photographers.³⁵ Another example is the first Magnum exhibition, *Gesicht der Zeit*, which toured five Austrian cities in 1955 and 1956. As well as such independent ventures, there were notable official exhibitions in the same vein. In 1955, an exhibition was hosted in San Francisco to mark the tenth anniversary of the signing in that city of the UN charter in June 1945. Titled *We the People* (figs. 5.1.1 to 5.1.3), it echoed the opening words of that charter. Kristen Gresh's research in the MoMA archives reveals that 'From 21 September to (approximately) 20 November of 1952 Steichen visited twenty cities in eleven European countries', including London, Paris, Munich, Berlin, Düsseldorf and Cologne.³⁶ In Paris, he visited the offices of *Réalités*, *Point de Vue – Images du Monde*, *Paris-Match* and *Plaisir de France*. In London, he met Lee Miller, Bill Brandt and Bert Hardy. Amongst others, he met Hermann Claasen in Germany.³⁷ Either side of his European trip, MoMA hosted two prior exhibitions.³⁸ In short, the ideas central to *The Family of Man* exhibition were circulating well before 1955 – both the conception of photography which underpinned it and the approach to the international politics of the postwar period which animated it. Undoubtedly, the exposure *The Family of Man* received is unparalleled, but the visual and verbal rhetoric of the exhibition – its commitment to photography as a universal language mobilised in

³⁵ 'People Are People the World Over', reminiscent of the humanising depictions discussed in chapter four, appeared in the American photo-magazine *Ladies Home Journal* in May 1948 and ran for twelve instalments. The magazine was the world's largest women's magazine and Magnum's biggest client in the first months following its establishment (Russell Miller, *Magnum: Fifty Years at the Front Line of History* (London: Pimlico, 1999), pp. 56 & 60). Sandeen has also noted how 'the seeming randomness of selection of the twelve sites for this investigation followed the inquisitiveness (and acquisitiveness) of a touristic imagination' (Sandeen, *Picturing an Exhibition*, p. 23).

³⁶ Kristen Gresh, 'The European Roots of the Family of Man', *History of Photography*, 29 (2005), 331–343 (p. 332).

³⁷ Gresh, 331–343 (pp. 334, 340 & 338).

³⁸ Both curated by Steichen, the exhibitions were *Five French Photographers: Brassai, Cartier-Bresson, Doisneau, Ronis, Izis* (1951) and *Postwar European Photography* (1953).

the service of peace, capable of bringing diverse people together in the image of a common humanity – are shared by many other lesser-known photographic events and initiatives of the 1940s and 1950s. This monumental exhibition was simply one part of this wider discourse which, like the publications issued by UNESCO in support of its early campaigns, aimed at promoting world understanding.

The close relation between UNESCO publications and Steichen's exhibition is underlined by an event hosted at the Hôtel Majestic and organised by the French National Commission to UNESCO in May 1955 (fig. 5.1.4 shows Steichen at the event).³⁹ Coinciding with the first Paris 'Biennale de la photographie et le cinema', the symposium was ambitiously titled, 'Les rencontres internationales sur le rôle de l'image dans la civilisation contemporaine'.⁴⁰ Chaired by the anthropologist and ethnologist, Paul Rivet (the President of the French National Commission to UNESCO), the event was attended by representatives from 24 different countries including the Federal and Democratic Republics of Germany, Britain and France. The International Council of Museums recommended that invitations be sent to a number of international delegates in the file of museums, including Edward Steichen and others from Belgium, Switzerland, Egypt and Italy.⁴¹ Additionally, a diverse range of individuals from manufacturing, psychology, philosophy, and politics attended. Six different commissions were convened during the symposium, including one headed by filmmaker Jean Benoist-Lévy (honorary director of the United Nations Film Board) and one by Steichen. In addition to the establishment of the International Centre of Film &

³⁹ In *Photo-Monde*, the dates of the conference were given as 9 to 13 May 1955 ('Les rencontres international sûr le rôle de l'image dans le civilisation contemporaine et la création d'un centre international de la photographie (fixe et animée)', *Photo-Monde*, 47-48 (1955), 86-90). In a report to the General Conference of 1956, the dates were given as 4 to 16 May 1955 ('Report of the Director-General on the Activities of the Organization in 1955', 1956, p. 100 <<http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0016/001608/160875eb.pdf>> [accessed 24 May 2011]). The title given to the event in this official document was, 'The Role of Visual Aids in Modern Civilisation'. The photographs reproduced here are featured in *Photo-Monde*. Reference is made in the various finding aids of UNESCO archives to the original photographs of the event, but following subsequent reorganisations the images themselves could not be located. I am very grateful to Adele Torrance and Alexandre Coutelle for their assistance during my research visit to the UNESCO Archives.

⁴⁰ In May 1955, there was also an exhibition of photographs sponsored by the UN at the Grand Palais, Paris ('Report of the Director-General on the Activities of the Organization in 1955', (p. 127)). It has not proved possible to confirm which exhibition it was, but it seems likely that this was either *We The Peoples* (exhibited in San Francisco the same year) or those in the special issue of *Photo-Monde* published to celebrate the tenth anniversary of the establishment of the UN ('La communauté humaine: Album Spécial du 10e Anniversaire des Nations Unies', *Photo-Monde*, 49-50 (1955)).

⁴¹ 'Report of the Director-General on the Activities of the Organization in 1955', p. 8.

Photography – Centre International de la Photographie (fixe et animée) – already mentioned, other recommendations made by the delegates included a campaign regarding the use of film and photography in teaching especially in ‘developing countries’ and the need for further reflection on the role of television. The ideas central to *The Family of Man* exhibition played a prominent role in this UNESCO sponsored event with its international (not to mention interdisciplinary) composition a year before the exhibition arrived in Paris. Like Steichen’s show, the event was predicated on – and its recommendations articulated – the value of photography to the question of international understanding.

An image from *The Family of Man* exhibition taken by Otto Hagel and depicting a child in the ruins of Pforzheim (fig. 5.1.5) reveals some of the workings and implications of this discursive formation. The boy runs down steps showing an apparent urgency. He is positioned in the foreground and centre of the image, but occupying four fifths of the space of the photograph is the ruined city – the outline of blackened walls, windows open to the sky; a tangle of weeds and briars; a church spire made transparent through fire damage. On the boy’s back is a satchel.⁴² The notion of a family, of course, is evocative of older generations with a past, but also of the younger generations and the future. Hagel’s image presents education’s important position in the postwar world: along with that satchel, the expectations and hopes of older generations rested on the boys shoulders. The past is symbolised by the ruins in the background; the future, by the child who propels himself down the steps on the way to school. Here, we have a visualisation of how this international family places a great deal of faith and responsibility on the next generation. Hagel’s photograph exhibits the relevance of the space of experience (the past; the ruins) and the horizon of expectation (the future; that which the boy’s movement seems directed to). Its inclusion in the exhibition – alongside 500 photos originating from many different nations – makes it represent more than the boy’s experience, or that even of the Pforzheim or West Germany. The photograph as *part of the exhibition* is transmuted into a synecdoche for human experience in the postwar world. Thus, photography universalises particular experience, projecting it on to a supranational plain. The scene is not so much universally comprehensible to all individuals through the international voice of photography; rather the individual’s experience is universalised through

⁴² In the catalogue of the exhibition, the image comes at the end of a section on learning, which includes an image taken by David Seymour of a middle-aged Italian man learning to write, another taken by Hagel of a tutorial at the University of California, one by Bert Hardy of a Burmese monk in traditional costume, and one taken by Ernst Haas of a contemplative Einstein.

photography. In the process, the specific details of the boy's past, present and future fall away. The world understanding such an example offers is thus everything and nothing: the child symbolises humanity, but the specificities of his experience are overwritten in this process of universalising. World understanding, in both *The Family of Man* and the early publications of UNESCO, is a way of looking at the world, convinced that to see it in its totality (effectively ignoring or screening its specificity) is to understand it.⁴³ Further examples from UNESCO publications will be discussed below. The similarity between the visual culture of UNESCO and the vision projected by *The Family of Man* is also to be read in an error made in the magazine *Photo-Cinéma*. Its review stated the exhibition was sponsored by UNESCO, rather than the USIA.⁴⁴

Roland Barthes was heavily critical of the manner in which he felt Steichen's exhibition evaded questions of history and injustice:

Everything here, the content and appeal of the pictures, the discourse which justifies them, aims to suppress the determining weight of History: we are held back at the surface of an identity, prevented precisely by sentimentality from penetrating into this ulterior zone of human

⁴³ Steichen's aim of 'explaining man to man' had a resonance for diverse audiences, as evidenced by the success of the original exhibition and the remaining in print of the catalogue for over half a century. This success – and the task of accounting for it – again raises the problem of reception for the historical analysis of photographs. As Sandeen notes, the exhibition accommodated diverse ways of connecting the images on display. In addition to the international picture considered here, it was possible to assemble nationally-focused picture-stories from the array of photographs: 'Broken loose from their original contexts [...] individual photographs could be reassembled into a historical narrative through the associations of each person viewing them, a freedom that worked against the well-planned architecture of the exhibition. For example, one could remove August Sander's fine portrait of the hod carrier, part of his *Antlitz der Zeit* (The Face of Our Time) series, and make it representative of Weimar Germany. This could be placed next to the photographs of Einstein, the most famous refugee from the Nazi regime that supplanted the Weimar Republic. The picture of Jewish survivors of the burning of the Warsaw ghetto, taken by an anonymous German photographer as they were led to their deaths, could represent the larger holocaust of that war. Finally, a photograph of a boy heading off to school through the ruins of West Germany, book bag over his shoulder, could represent the aftermath of World War II' (Sandeen, *Picturing an Exhibition*, p. 56). Additionally, the exhibition also included images of the 1953 Berlin uprising. This example of the manner in which diverse nation-oriented readings could be accommodated within the international perspective implies the possibility of viewing the exhibition against the grain. However, as with the construction of an imagined Western European community discussed in chapter four, the national and international are not mutually exclusive. Recognition of differences (of history, of culture, of experience) can coexist with other appealing invitations to partake in broad communities; the local and the global can be coextensive and complementary.

⁴⁴ Fritz Neugass, 'La Grande famille des hommes', *Photo-Cinéma*, 652 (1956), 23-24.

behaviour where historical alienation introduces some 'differences' which we shall here quite simply call 'injustices'.⁴⁵

While Barthes' argument is persuasive, suggesting that in appealing to the emotions the images by necessity efface history, he seems to set up a false dichotomy between emotion and history. In fact, to understand the discursive formation in which photography circulates, it is necessary to consider fully the emotional appeal of the images. Emotion and history are entwined, not mutually exclusive. This is not to deny Barthes' assertion regarding the upshot of this representation – that it lends 'the immobility of the world the alibi of a "wisdom" and a "lyricism" which only make the gestures of man look eternal the better to defuse them'.⁴⁶ Rather, it is to provide an account of how this appeal is made. The publications of UNESCO and *The Family of Man* are mutually supporting projects. As such they are both open to Barthes' criticism. But as Blake Stimson has done for *The Family of Man*, effort needs to be made to examine the appeal of this reassuring vision of oneness evident in UNESCO's early campaigns at a time of proliferating conflict owing to the Cold War and decolonisation.⁴⁷

The possibility of peace was so strongly articulated – and met such a receptive audience – in part because of the perceived threat of war. The instances in which photography is discussed explicitly regarding the internationalist perspective in the early and mid-fifties (along with the success of *The Family of Man* and the plethora of similar photographic publications and exhibitions of the time) are a cultural response to a moment of crisis as the centrality of the nation state reasserted itself. These projects are not simply examples of a now familiar humanist mode of photography; they are also various acts of iconoclasm. Within the frame of Hagel's photograph, the image of the past war is combated by the image of the boy, urgently rushing to school and the future. *The Family of Man* is, in its entirety, an orchestrated visual reaction or iconoclastic riposte to the image of a possible Third World War. While the famous catalogue ends with an image of the UN debating chamber, the original exhibition finished with a backlit, wall-to-ceiling colour transparency of a mushroom cloud.

⁴⁵ Roland Barthes, 'The Great Family of Man', in *Mythologies* (London: Paladin, 1973), pp. 100–102 (p. 101).

⁴⁶ Barthes, pp. 100–102 (p. 102).

⁴⁷ Blake Stimson, *The Pivot of the World: Photography and Its Nation* (Cambridge, MA.: MIT Press, 2000).

Steichen offers a stark choice between two pictures of the future: The 500 or so monochrome images in the human family album or the technicolour horror of nuclear war.

In his introductory essay for the catalogue, Steichen (who had worked in aerial reconnaissance in the First and Second World Wars) stated his belief that photography could offer 'a mirror of the essential oneness of mankind throughout the world'.⁴⁸ Like the window on the world of the *Courier*, Steichen's mirror metaphor highlights how the various internationalisms of the postwar period were shot through with questions of visibility. Together these figures of speech are indicative of two distinctive representational strategies that will be considered in detail in the following sections – one depicting cultural artefacts including architecture and urban space, the other picturing the human face. UNESCO publications sought to frame cultural artefacts in a manner that would imply a shared heritage or forge a cultural memory for the imagined global community. This is the window in operation. UNESCO also used images of individuals to conjure up a sense of shared humanity through practices of humanisation and recognition discussed in the previous chapter. This is the mirror in operation. Crucially, these metaphors also reveal the inescapable partiality or agency of modes of visualisation. An image is never simply a transparent medium or a faithful reflection. The mirror, like photography, distorts that which it depicts reducing three dimensions to two. It reflects only what it is directed at. Similarly, the window frames a scene excluding elements and accentuating that which is included. Both metaphoric characterisations of photography inadvertently highlight the constructed nature of the photograph. Moreover, in addition to this constructedness, the mirror and the window make the viewer the locus of a given scene as the photograph does. As Abigail Solomon-Godeau explained and as has already been explicated in chapter three, the naturalised conventions of the static image derived from Renaissance perspective confer a sense of 'visual mastery [...] upon the spectator'.⁴⁹ Thus, the lie is given to the conception of photography as a universal language. It is rather a mode of visualising which produces constructed and intentional images related to a markedly Western-centric tradition of practices of looking.

The foregoing survey of the conception of photography as a universal language in the debate regarding mass communications, brings into focus the work to which

⁴⁸ Museum of Modern Art, *The Family of Man*, p. 4.

⁴⁹ Solomon-Godeau, p. 181.

photography was put and the implications of its use to a history of the postwar internationalist ideal – an ideal which combined a mix of emotional appeals calling on the past and future through the historically-conditioned photographic discourses of the time. To understand the appeal of photography – both to cultural diplomats, peace campaigners and audiences – the task is not to champion the dominant conception of photography in the postwar moment, nor to side with its critics and decry it. Rather it must be to flesh out the rather selective discussion that tends to focus on the idea of photography as a universal language in general and *The Family of Man* exhibition in particular, by highlighting the implications of the broader discursive formation in which circulated the photography mobilised by UNESCO.⁵⁰ A focus on UNESCO is necessary because, as J. P. Singh claims, ‘never before had an organization debated the contours of this issue at the global level and tried to outline its implications for the very existence of the international system’.⁵¹ More specific examples will be considered now of the manner in which, through photography, UNESCO met the challenge, as Laves and Thomson termed it, of ‘one of the central problems of peace: the attitudes of peoples towards each other and their understanding of the role of international cooperation in the promotion of human welfare’.⁵² The conception of cultural diplomacy as the promotion of world understanding through mass communications amounted to the continuation of a war of images. Just as UNESCO made an official Declaration against the idea that war is inevitable a mere three years after the end of the Second World War, it launched a visual offensive on the threat of war and the conflicts that marked its first decade. Steichen’s atomic explosion was the counter-image to the entire discursive formation in which UNESCO’s use of photography circulated. Combating this icon was the underlying diplomatic task engaged in by a host of publications.

⁵⁰ Connections between Steichen’s exhibition and the work of UNESCO continue into the twenty-first century. *The Family of Man* exhibition was included in the UNESCO Memory of the World Register in 2003. The exhibition has also been recreated at the Château de Clervaux in Luxemburg.

⁵¹ Singh, p. 109.

⁵² Laves and Thomson, p. xx.

5.2 Landmarks of Civilisation: Human Rights and World Culture

UNESCO is working to make human rights known and understood: but six out of ten people cannot even read the Universal Declaration. [...] It is essential that the workers in the laboratories, the press, the radio, the theatre, and the schools of the world work together to preserve freedom and to build for peace. This is the task before UNESCO.

*Human Rights Exhibition Album*⁵³

One variant of postwar internationalism which attempted to achieve world understanding rested on the positing of a universal 'world culture'. This idea was advanced in UNESCO's promotion of the human rights agenda through (amongst other imagery) the use of urban photography. As in British, French and German ruin photobooks of the late 1940s, photography of architecture and the built environment was here used to evoke a specific conception of the past and worked to constitute a particular imagined community. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights was adopted in Paris on 10th December 1948 by the UN General Assembly. The following day, at the Annual General Conference taking place in Beirut, UNESCO adopted a resolution to promote the Declaration.⁵⁴ Considered well-suited to overcoming the barriers of different languages and illiteracy, photography was a constructive tool in UNESCO's efforts at standard setting or norm formation among member states, of which the promotion of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights was an early example. From October to December of 1949, UNESCO held an exhibition at the Musée Galliera in Paris. (Fig. 5.2.1 shows the poster designed by Jacques N. Garamond).⁵⁵ Using material selected for this exhibition, the following year UNESCO produced and disseminated 12,000 copies of the *Human Rights Exhibition Album*. Aimed at initiating a raft of exhibitions in member countries, it consisted of 110 loose-

⁵³ UNESCO, *Human Rights Exhibition Album* (Paris: UNESCO, 1950).

⁵⁴ UNESCO worked alongside the UN commission on the Rights of Man during the process of debating the potential content of such a charter. UNESCO established a committee, chaired by historian E. H. Carr, the conclusions of which were published in, UNESCO, *Human Rights: Comments and Interpretations* (London: Allan Wingate, 1949).

⁵⁵ Material relating to the planning of this exhibition is held by the UNESCO Archives, Paris (e.g. UNESCO/MC/Droits de l'homme/48 to /50, 'Exposition droits de l'homme, Musée Galliera').

leaf, large format plates carrying either photographs or photographic reproductions of paintings and engravings. The first two dozen images offer a preamble to the main part of the exhibition through a depiction of 'the principal stages in human development'. The larger part of the illustrations (plates 26 to 106) is divided into fourteen themes, each covering the historical struggle for a particular right or set of rights. This visual material was accompanied by mountable titles and captions; a text titled 'A Short History of Human Rights', designed to assist those hosting the exhibition either for complementary events and discussions, or guided tours of an installation; and a small pamphlet detailing alternative ways in which to present the album (fig. 5.2.2), with sketches illustrating ways to 'improve the presentation and *visualisation*' of the narrative and themes depicted in the plates and captions. An analysis of the exhibition album reveals the tensions at the heart of the idea of a universal, world culture and the use of photography in the organisation's early campaigns.⁵⁶

In setting the scene for the main body of the exhibition, the first two dozen exhibition plates interweave narratives of civilisation's progress with the struggle for human rights. From pre-history to the establishment of the United Nations, plates 2 to 25 present a rapid-fire depiction of the growth of civilisation employing images of the fossilised footprint of a cave-dweller to the Parisian debating hall in which the UN first met. Within this context, images of architecture are used to symbolise the high watermarks of previous cultures. Plate 13, for instance, shows the ruined Temple of Poseidon (fig. 5.2.3) next to a photograph of a bust of Socrates. Plate 17 (fig. 5.2.4) shows a photographic reproduction of an engraving of the destruction of the Bastille in July 1789. The widely differing cultures and histories of, say, ancient Greece and revolutionary France are, by their distillation into a few select images (here a contemporary photo of a ruin, and a photographic reproduction of an engraving of a destruction in progress), offered up as comparable or equivalent steps in a continuous history. The 'Short History' booklet encapsulates this use of architectural imagery with various spatial metaphors. Describing the achievements of past cultures as 'landmarks', it also states that 'the illustrations mark the stages along the road leading from the cave-man [...] to the free citizen of a modern democracy'. Photography and

⁵⁶ The *Human Rights Exhibition Album* is a hybrid product different from the books, magazines and official publications which have been the principal focus of this study. As suggested by its title, the *Exhibition Album* blurs the distinction between book and exhibition. It is included here because it represents an exception to the grounds on which exhibitions have been largely excluded, as explained in chapter one. It was widely distributed and all the original materials which made up this do-it-yourself exhibition kit are available for analysis.

photographic reproduction here make possible a visualisation of a unified narrative of human development. This development or progress, in turn, is made synonymous with the struggle for human rights. In other words, from prehistoric tools to the modern press, the changing artefacts of everyday life are pictured in such a manner as to represent a narrative of continuous progress which is the visual correlate of the human rights struggle.⁵⁷ David Lowenthal has asserted that, 'heritage distils the past into icons of identity'.⁵⁸ Employing photography and photographic reproduction, the *Human Rights Exhibition Album* works to universalise icons such as the Bastille or a Greek temple, glossing the contradictions and conflicts of the past under the image of a shared heritage of an imagined global community.

Architectural imagery is again pressed in to service when it comes to the depiction of individual rights, their history and importance. For instance, the city is represented as the place in which both legitimate debate takes place (the free citizen exercises his rights) and tolerance is exercised. Under the theme of 'Freedom of thought and opinion', plate 77 offers a depiction of political activism (fig. 5.2.5). It shows a speaker at Hyde Park Corner and rally posters on a Parisian wall. Under the theme of 'Freedom of religion', plate 73 again represents Parisian streets (fig. 5.2.6). The viewer is offered a selection of nine religious buildings (including mosques, synagogues and churches of various denominations), with a caption that reads: 'Freedom today is enjoyed by almost all religious bodies, and there is nothing to prevent different religions from existing peacefully side by side in one city'. Thus, the city is depicted as the site at which tolerance is realised in the modern world – as if urbanisation and freedom of thought are mutually-supporting phenomena; as if architecture and democracy are the synonymous 'landmarks' of 'the principle stages in human development'.⁵⁹ This subtle but persistent idealising of architecture and city space in the visualisation of the struggle for human rights and the promotion of the Universal Declaration thus reveals a

⁵⁷ Stefan-Ludwig Hoffmann highlights the idealisation inherent in such a narrative, describing the history of the human rights agenda as 'a history marked more by ruptures than continuities' (*Human Rights in the Twentieth Century*, ed. by Stefan-Ludwig Hoffmann (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), p. 15).

⁵⁸ David Lowenthal, 'Identity, Heritage, and History', in *Commemorations: The Politics of National Identity*, ed. by John Gillis (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994), p. 43.

⁵⁹ There is a dark irony in these visualisations of liberty. Despite the visualisation of religious tolerance through the juxtaposed Parisian religious building in plate 73, the city was the site, in July 1942, of the rounding up and deportation of over 13,000 members of the Parisian Jewish population. Prior to deportation, they were held in the same velodrome – the Vel d'Hiv – referenced in the bottom poster pictured in plate 77.

value judgement at the core of the exhibition: that civilisation and, by implication, the pursuit of human rights finds its ultimate expression in urban life. In the urban imagery of the *Human Rights Exhibition Album* is seen the distillation (to use Lowenthal's term) of the image of the city into an icon of an imagined global community. World understanding and urban culture are bound together.

However, depictions of architecture and urbanism do not dominate the selection of images. Culture generally conceived is the main subject of these images; architecture and urban space being just one privileged instance. Photography and photographic reproduction is used to picture diverse artefacts from diverse cultures, including paintings, sculptures, ceramics, illustrations and seminal texts like the French Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen (1789) or the British Magna Carta (1215). The images and captions of the album oscillate between two different conceptions of culture (as an individual, material object, and as a general, shared way of life).⁶⁰ But in both instances is demonstrated the instrumentalisation by UNESCO of the concept of culture in pursuit of its peace aims. Crucially, photography facilitates the comparison of cultures distant in time and space. Photography brings these cultures together, forging a picture of human civilisation in which each culture is simply a component part. What unifies the representation of architecture, urban space and these diverse artefacts is their role in creating an image of a 'world culture', universally participated in by all nations and historical periods.⁶¹ World culture is here conceived as a democratic tradition – just as modernist architecture (as discussed in chapter three) was considered a democratic style and amateur photography (examined in chapter four), a democratic leisure pursuit.

⁶⁰ These two conceptions were discussed in chapter one with reference to Raymond Williams.

⁶¹ There are notable exceptions to this image of world culture as the struggle for human rights, such as the Soviet 'Declaration of the Rights of the Toiling and Exploited People' (1918). The Soviet Union is, in a sense, the exhibition's unconscious. Not referenced, it is the threat of war with the USSR that animates much of the visual culture of the period, as suggested by the closing image of *The Family of Man* exhibition. Images of Nazism, on the contrary, are mobilised. Photographs of adulation of Hitler, the burning of books, and Buchenwald concentration camp, are used to assert that the denial of rights is barbarism. The image of Nazism is thus the foil to the image of world culture. There is therefore an iconoclastic opposition in the contrast between this small selection of familiar imagery from the Reich and the wealth of pictures pitted against it in constructing the notion of world culture. Comparably, the abolition of slavery offers another micro-narrative of the triumph of justice over injustice, subsumed in the overall trajectory of human development. The more vexed questions of colonisation and decolonisation are, like communism, notable by their absence.

Talk of world culture and of the heritage of mankind recurs time and time again in UNESCO debates and publications. Thus, the instrumentalisation of culture through photography in the promotion of the human rights agenda reveals a broader universalising impulse at the heart of UNESCO's conception of culture in its early years. This is the cultural memory that the exhibition offers, taking the cultural artefacts of diverse civilisations and shaping them into a visual narrative of one continuous human development. Plates 92 & 93 (figs. 5.2.7 and 5.2.8), for instance, come under the theme of 'liberty of creative work'. The caption for plate 92 reads, 'The heritage of civilizations consists in the work of its artists, scientists and thinkers. Every civilization creates a new vision of man which is the mark of its contribution to history'. In a manner similar to that discussed in the previous chapter regarding photo-magazines, these photographs of faces humanise other cultures. Thus, the image of 'world culture' forged by the exhibition album through photography and photographic reproduction – like Steichen's visualisation of the family of man or talk in the preamble to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 'the human family' – collapses difference and projects oneness. This is achieved through the visual material of the exhibition album; it is the 'new vision of man' offered by this variant of internationalism founded on the positing of a world culture.⁶²

The universal conception of culture was a central tenet of the UNESCO campaign, since the concept of world culture implies a shared ground constituting the global public sphere in which a declaration of human rights can have universal application. The role of photography in this process is not incidental; it is foundational. André Malraux argued that photography achieved a comparable collapsing of difference in the field of art history (fig. 5.2.9).⁶³ His argument is directly relevant to this notion of world culture. For Malraux, following on from the institution of the museum, photography had changed the way art was conceptualised. The museum divorced art from its original context and functions (religious devotion, signification of status). Photographic reproduction, in turn, adding to the decontextualisation of art works by the museum, achieved a certain visual levelling. The effect of the medium in the

⁶² It is pertinent that this is a new *vision*. Shown again is the manner in which questions of sight and seeing permeated the discussion of internationalism, giving rise to the distinctive way of seeing and talking about questions of human welfare in the postwar moment which was, like architectural debate, shot through with a vocabulary of visuality.

⁶³ (André Malraux, 'Museum Without Walls', in *The Voices of Silence* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1978), pp. 13–130). Incidentally, fig. 5.2.9 depicting Malraux surveying photographs was taken by Maurice Jarnoux, who photographed boys playing soldiers in the ruins of Bonn overseen by a photographic portrait of Eisenhower pinned to a wall (fig. 4.3.12).

domain of art history has been to insist that all works are comparable and thus part of the same narrative of development.⁶⁴ Indeed, photography not only facilitates comparisons of diverse styles and movements; it demands them, transmuting the discipline of art history into the task of crafting such an illustrated narrative: 'For the last hundred years [...] art history has been the history of that which can be photographed.'⁶⁵ Malraux went on to assert that the 'specious unity imposed by photographic reproduction on a multiplicity of objects', gives rise to a view of art history in which this multiplicity becomes 'for the first time the common heritage of all mankind'.⁶⁶ Photography, in Malraux's view, is a dynamic, productive influence which lies behind the attitude to culture as a shared patrimony, making us view all works (whatever separates them in terms of distance and time) as contiguous (part of a shared or common heritage) through this levelling capacity which makes all photographed things assume a sort of equivocal equivalence. The 'museum without walls' which photographic reproduction produces is directly comparable to the work photography does in the campaign to promote the human rights agenda. Photography is not only an essential means by which the regional and national cultures of the world can be synthesised into a world culture; its hundred year history of reproducing cultural artefacts implicates the medium in the very possibility of conceptualising 'world culture' in the manner exemplified in the campaigns of UNESCO's early years.

But what are the implications of this visualisation of world culture, of synthesising through photography diverse cultural artefacts in an effort to forge a cultural memory for an imagined global community? In short, culture is reified. It is viewed not as lived experience, but as a set of objects. While both the text and the images of the exhibition encompass the two conceptions of culture, the overall effect of the exhibition is to resolve in favour of one pole of this opposition, to privilege what Raymond Williams termed 'the works and practices of intellectual [...] and artistic activity'.⁶⁷ The photograph, itself an object, has the effect of reifying that which is not an object. While the photographs may strive to represent both practices and material culture, culture as a shared way of life can only be presented metonymically through an

⁶⁴ Andrew E. Hershberger highlights four points that Malraux makes regarding how photography achieves this effect: object de-familiarization, family misrepresentation, scale reduction and temporal transformation (Andrew E. Hershberger, 'Malraux's Photography', *History of Photography*, 26 (2002), 269–275 (p. 272)).

⁶⁵ Malraux, pp. 13–130 (p. 30).

⁶⁶ Malraux, pp. 13–130 (p. 46).

⁶⁷ Raymond Williams, p. 90.

image of an artefact (like a prehistoric tool) or through a photograph of a practice (like agriculture). So, the image of contemporary agricultural practices becomes an object in its own right, just like the image of the prehistoric tools. Regardless of what is depicted in the photograph, the conception of culture always comes down on one side of the dichotomy. Everything is subsumed under the category of the object to be understood, and the idea of culture as a shared way of living (while referenced by the exhibition) is overwritten by *the photography of things* or *the photograph as thing*. This is an intellectualised view of culture; photography is both a condition of its possibility and a tool of its realisation. Amrith and Sluga have argued compellingly that ‘the UN’s intellectual genealogy lies in the colonial encounter and in colonial disciplines such as anthropology’.⁶⁸ The same can be said of the UNESCO concept of world culture in its early years. Culture, refracted through the prism of photography, becomes a set of musealised artefacts, divorced from everyday life of both 1950 and 13,000BC. This conception entails an appropriation of culture and the need to subsume it into the categories of the museum; the implication being that it can only be understood and appreciated within this context, and that understanding and appreciation (not practice) are the appropriate operations when faced with culture.

In reifying and universalising culture as the heritage of all mankind, the nation may be relegated to a position of lesser importance, but UNESCO’s concept of culture associated with this enterprise in its early years is marked by tensions and inconsistencies. This visualisation and intellectualisation of culture – though intended to have the opposite impact – can be interpreted as the entrenching of difference, rather than its collapse. In decontextualising diverse cultural artefacts and placing them in a relation of equivalence with one another, the museum without walls created by the photography of the exhibition album does not respect diverse cultures or accommodate difference within the idea of world culture. It imposes the divorce of culture from its bases in individual experiences. Synthesising diverse artefacts and ways of life into a global cultural memory denies the diversity of communities to which they are attached, in favour of the universal, one-world ideal. As the museum decontextualises artworks, so too does the UNESCO instrumentalisation of cultural artefacts in the visualisation of a ‘world culture’, subsuming all cultures into the same narrative of human development. As Finkelkraut observes, the notion of world culture can mean the denial of culture for some, rather than emancipation:

⁶⁸ Sunil Amrith and Glenda Sluga, ‘New Histories of the United Nations’, *Journal of World History*, 19 (2008), 251–274 (p. 258).

At the same time in effect we [westerners] granted the “other” man his culture, we robbed him of his liberty. His very name vanished into the name of the community. He became nothing more than an interchangeable unit in a whole class of cultural beings. He was supposed to be receiving an unconditional acceptance; in fact he was being denied any margin of manoeuvre, any means of escape. He was forbidden any originality and trapped insidiously in his differentiated culture. We thought we were moving from abstract man to real man. In reality we were suppressing the flexibility between the individual and the society which produces him [...] Out of altruism non-Westerners were forced into a homogenous bloc within which their real identities were crushed.⁶⁹

The one-world vision may have been an effort to circumvent the dangerous nationalisms seen to be at the root of war. Its upshot, however, was not necessarily world understanding, but the instrumentalisation and dubious appropriation of culture. While images like plate 92 try to humanise different cultures (giving them a face, so to speak), they run the risk of turning the divisions between cultures into stone.

Yet, while the visual culture of UNESCO in its early years may have been working to promote a Euro-centric bias, explicit discussion within the organisation was moving away from the restrictions imposed by the one-world ideal. This distinction can be seen nowhere more clearly than in the publication, *This is Our Power* (1949) which consisted of two short speeches by the outgoing and incoming Directors-General. Different ways of thinking about internationalism are evident from the contrast between the two. A former trustee of the Council for Education in World Citizenship, Huxley – again using a visual metaphor – asks delegates at the Beirut conference in his retirement address, ‘Have you looked at your problems from a Unesco Angle – that is to say not merely as national problems but as part of a single world problem, where the several nations must learn to make adjustments in the interest of the whole body of nations?’⁷⁰ He even goes so far as to describe public intellectuals as ‘these citizens of the One World of the human mind’.⁷¹ Torres Bodet, a former Minister for Education in Mexico, on the other hand, opaquely referencing the Cold War crystallised around this

⁶⁹ Alain Finkielkraut, *The Undoing of Thought* (London: Claridge Press, 1988), pp. 73–74.

⁷⁰ Huxley and Bodet, p. 9.

⁷¹ Huxley and Bodet, p. 10.

time in the Berlin Airlift, spoke of the 'the present world crisis' which means, 'many of the aims which inspired us in creating Unesco are now in jeopardy'.⁷² Torres Bodet, more pessimistic, less programmatic and didactic, stresses the need for a more pluralistic approach:

The interdependence of peoples, an overriding necessity to-day, is not confined to the political and economic fields; it applies as much to the spheres of culture and the mind. In every part of the world, voices proclaim that we are moving towards a new humanism. This means we can no longer accept, unmodified, the idea of man and of culture that classical humanism bequeathed. [...] Classical humanism was at one time restricted to the Mediterranean region. Modern humanism must know no frontiers. It is Unesco's supreme task to help to bring this new type of humanism to birth.⁷³

Torres Bodet argues against the idea that 'Unesco has become an instrument of propaganda for one way of thinking and in favour of one system of cultural policy [...] there is and always will be room among us for all schools of thought, as long as they contribute loyally to international understanding and to friendly association between cultures in an atmosphere of peace'.⁷⁴ But this was a problem not easily resolved, as evidenced by an essay from September 1955 in the *UNESCO Chronicle* titled, 'The Diversity of Cultures and the World Community', in which Jean d'Ormesson argued for the notion of 'world culture' stating that 'either culture means nothing at all or it must, in our day, cease to be purely regional'.⁷⁵ In UNESCO's first decade, there was a plurality of positions held by those supportive of the organisation (both within and outwith), from the hardline 'one-worlders' to more pragmatic individuals who looked for a community of nations. But most significant for this study is the apparent disjuncture between the organisation's move from one end of this spectrum to the other and the rigidity of the visual culture mobilised by it in which photography played an important role.

⁷² Huxley and Bodet, p. 13.

⁷³ Huxley and Bodet, p. 16.

⁷⁴ Huxley and Bodet, p. 17.

⁷⁵ Jean d'Ormesson, 'The Diversity of Cultures and the World Community', *UNESCO Chronicle*, 3 (1955), 9-15 (p. 12).

The history of the human rights agenda in the twentieth century, its implications and its inconsistent reception or application, is a current concern of postwar historiography. Research reveals the postwar articulation of human rights to be marked by state interest and shot through with contradictory ideologies.⁷⁶ Such contradictions surface in the UNESCO concept of culture and in the overlapping internationalisms relevant to its work and its representatives. The drafting of the Universal Declaration did indeed draw on an international swathe of opinion and UNESCO was involved in this process. As Amirth and Sluga have asserted, 'The Universal Declaration of Human Rights might be seen [...] as an amalgam of competing, or converging, universalisms – imperial and anticolonial, "Eastern" and "Western," old and new.'⁷⁷ Against this backdrop, UNESCO sought to frame human rights as the product of a unified process of human development, itself the thread of a universal world culture. There were two practical problems in promoting the human rights agenda which the Department of Mass Communications sought to overcome in developing the exhibition at the Musée Galliéra and the subsequent exhibition album: the barriers of language and illiteracy, and the task of giving a visual form to the words of the Universal Declaration. The *Human Rights Exhibition Album*, stemming from UNESCO's decision the day after the Universal Declaration's adoption, worked to shape a discourse of human rights which emphasised the visual. The practical motivation of this approach mobilising photography and photographic reproduction is readily understandable. What discussion of the *Exhibition Album* demonstrates are the unintended consequences of this visual culture which runs contrary to the ethos of the Universal Declaration and the manner of its drafting. That is, the problematic relation it throws up between the individual, local or national cultures and a global imagined community. The material produced by UNESCO told a unidirectional, homogenous narrative of the struggle for recognition of human rights in which the privileging of urban space suggests a Western perspective, and diverse cultures are reduced to static and equivalent parts of a world culture.⁷⁸ The

⁷⁶ Mazower notes that, while the increasing prominence of the human rights agenda during the war and immediately after 'can be told in the optimistic mode', it was also a debate determined not simply by idealism, but by state interest and was thus 'imbued with its fair share of cynicism. In short, in order to not curtail the sovereignty of individual states 'the human rights rhetoric was deliberately bereft of mechanisms that might have made it enforceable' (Mark Mazower, 'The Strange Triumph of Human Rights, 1933–1950', *Historical Journal*, 47 (2004), 379–398 (pp. 381 & 394)).

UNESCO, *Human Rights: Comments and Interpretations*.

⁷⁷ Sunil Amrith and Glenda Sluga, 251–274 (p. 256).

⁷⁸ This is also seen in the organisation's choice of a Greek temple as its logo – another icon of identity universalised. The logo was designed soon after the establishment of the organisation

Human Rights Exhibition Album and its attendant notion of world culture is a representative example of UNESCO's objectives and how it aimed to achieve this end of an international public sphere in the postwar decade, reflecting as it does both key representational strategies and important tensions or contradictions central to the pursuit of world understanding through mass communications.

The *Human Rights Exhibition Album* was an educational initiative, reproduced and disseminated around the world, using the idea of culture to project the image of the shared heritage of the international community, which in turn was used to ground the notion of human rights. It worked to forge an image of world culture to develop world understanding. But this internationalist stance had its critics. Herman Hesse, for instance, highlighted that peace was not simply a question of increased understanding between nations – France and Germany understood each other well enough, but this had no positive bearing on the course of peace.⁷⁹ Hans Morgenthau delivered a similarly cutting assessment of UNESCO's efforts in his study of international politics first published in 1948. Highlighting that Americans read Dostoyevsky and Russian theatres were staging performances of Shakespeare, he saw culture as largely incidental to the question of international cooperation:

The problem of world community is a moral and political and not an intellectual and esthetic one. The world community is a community of moral judgments and political actions, not of intellectual endowments and esthetic appreciations.⁸⁰

While his assessment may be accurate vis-à-vis the *Human Rights Exhibition Album*, the album does not represent the only way in which UNESCO used photography in the task of securing the foundations of peace in the minds of men. UNESCO's campaigns to raise funds and awareness in the postwar decade regarding educational reconstruction and the plight of children in war devastated countries demonstrate a very different style of address to its audience – one posited on identification through the figure of the face, rather than the creation of a shared cultural memory. This one-to-one

and first appeared on the cover of UNESCO, *Reconstruction and Rehabilitation Newsletter*, 8-9 (1947).

⁷⁹ Cited by Richard Hoggart, *An Idea and Its Servants: UNESCO from Within* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1978), pp. 59–60.

⁸⁰ Hans Morgenthau, *Politics Among Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1993), p. 353.

encounter of the individual audience member and the individual in the image (frequently in an urban setting) worked to forge a sense of community (with attendant notions of responsibility) between individuals also outside of national groups.

Nation states were the key players in Morgenthau's style of approach to internationalism. In contrast, the mode of photographic representation of the problem of educational reconstruction considered in the next section, conjured the idea of world citizenship. Reflection on this mode of photographic representation highlights the inadequate seriousness with which an approach to internationalism such as Morgenthau's takes the task of cultural analysis. The notion of 'world heritage' – as opposed to world culture – is central to the work and public image of UNESCO today. It too is concerned (albeit not exclusively) with architecture and the built environment, from the Pyramids of Giza to Auguste Perret's reconstruction of Le Havre. However, the discourse of world heritage is less closely aligned or allied with that of human rights than was that of world culture in UNESCO's postwar exhibition album. So-called 'concerned photography' and recognition of the individual in moments of crisis or conflict – not the crafting of an image of a universal world culture – has become the mode of photography central to the human rights agenda. Today, the unofficial discourse of human rights has far outstripped the official, and to understand its success it is necessary to trace its relation to photography. As Linfield suggests 'photography has been central to fostering the idea that the individual citizen and the "international community," not the nation-state, is the final arbiter of human-rights crimes. It's impossible to imagine transnational groups such as Amnesty International, Human Rights, or Doctors Without Borders in the pre-photographic age.'⁸¹ A cultural practice like photography – contrary to Morgenthau's assertion – is not simply the foam on the crest of the wave; it has the capacity to influence the flow of the tide. The next section addresses UNESCO's use of such images in its early campaign work on youth and education.

⁸¹ Alessandra Mauro, *My Brother's Keeper: Documentary Photographers and Human Rights* (Contrasto, 2007), p. 20.

5.3 *Citizens of Tomorrow: Youth, Education and World Citizenship*

The wartime discourse of planning and reconstruction in the Allied nations, as discussed in chapter three, went beyond the daunting task of rebuilding. It encompassed a wider popularity for the reimagining of social policy, urban development, and a host of other aspects of life which had been under discussion in the interwar period. With the Allied victory, these debates began to be translated into practical actions which had an impact on the three comparator countries under consideration here. Education was included in the array of issues re-examined in the utopianism of the postwar moment. In the postwar world, a close connection was drawn in the discourse of reconstruction between the idea of a new global order and the education of the individual.⁸² When the war was over, the extent of the material and logistical problems faced in the field of education became apparent. For instance, G. E. Kidder Smith reports that 'of the 1,200 schools in use in London in 1939, only 50 escaped damage or destruction during the war'.⁸³ In February 1947 UNESCO hosted a meeting of international voluntary organisations, known as the Temporary International Council for Education Reconstruction (TICER), to tackle this situation. By the end of the 1940s, this effort towards educational reconstruction encompassed over 200 organisations, and had raised and distributed \$100million.⁸⁴ UNESCO's involvement revolved chiefly around facilitation and co-ordination, rather than operational work. Predictably, in the publications which accompanied this effort, photographs of children were prominent. The manner in which these images address their audience requires closer examination.

⁸² Material from these wartime debates reveals the marked investment in evocations of an internationalist future while the battle raged on. For instance, among the papers of Pierre Maisonneuve (Director of the Secretariat of the 'Commissions d'études des problèmes d'après-guerre' under de Gaulle's Free French government-in-exile in London) is an article by Lou Fetterlein titled, 'German Education after the War', dated 12 November 1942. Contrasting the situations in Britain and Germany for his French readers, Fetterlein asks, 'What are the right educational aims?' He replies: 'I think we may be safe in saying quite generally that they are to create a COMMUNITY OF INDIVIDUALS in any one country and ultimately to make each individual country a member of the community of nations.' (ANF/72AJ/546/Dossier XI, Section intellectuelle et de l'enseignement, Travaux, Lou Fetterlein, 'German Education after the War', 12 November 1942, p. 1 (capitals in original)). The paper exists in French and English versions. Quotations here are from the English language version.

⁸³ Kidder Smith cites *Architectural Design*, June 1959, as the source of these figures (Kidder Smith, p. 35).

⁸⁴ Besterman, p. 76.

The use of photography of children in the relevant UNESCO campaigns made a direct emotional appeal to audiences through the faces of the children depicted, in striking contrast to the intellectualised appeal through the instrumentalisation of culture made by the *Human Rights Exhibition Album* and comparable publications. In addition to this emotional appeal, the images of children had two important characteristics: the 'youth question' was simultaneously represented as being outside, above or somehow disassociated from a given nation; and children themselves came to be symbols of the future. This dual de-nationalised and future-focused framing of youth is captured in the title of an edition of the French magazine, *Photo-Monde*, published in 1956 and sponsored by UNESCO: 'Today's children – Tomorrow's Citizens'.⁸⁵ Featuring photos by Lucien Hervé, Henri Cartier-Bresson, Robert Doisneau, Marc Riboud and others, it had a tri-lingual preface in French, English and Spanish by the psychologist (best known for his work on child development) and Director of the former International Bureau of Education, Jean Piaget.⁸⁶ Piaget described the 'six hundred million or so children of the world' as 'mankind's capital for the future'. He went on:

It is on how these children grow and learn, upon the use they can make of their intelligence, upon their attitudes, and upon their willingness to contribute not only to their national society but to the brotherhood of nations, that the peace and happiness of the world will depend.

The idea of being a citizen of tomorrow, as posited by the title of the publication, neatly divorces citizenship from national association and yokes the image of the child with the idea of the future.

The postwar city proved to be a backdrop rich with significance for the representation of children as an international concern on which the future depended. Much material published by UNESCO on the subject of educational reconstruction gave detailed, practical guidance for people directly involved with education and

⁸⁵ 'Enfants d'aujourd'hui ... Hommes de demain', *Photo-Monde*, 51-52 (1956). The English language title is the official translation as noted in UNESCO publicity material ('To-day's children ... To-morrow's Citizens', *UNESCO Features*, 24 Dec 1956, p. 2). The brief press release also exhibited a preoccupation with emotion relevant to the notions of humanisation and identification discussed here and in the previous chapter in relation to photographic portraits: 'Children's faces – happy and tearful, curious, exultant, absorbed or expectant – transfixed by the camera's lens, are a fascinating subject for study'.

⁸⁶ Piaget was also interim Assistant Director-General and Head of the Department of Education at UNESCO in 1950 (Valderrama, p. 65).

teaching in UNESCO's member states.⁸⁷ But another key aspect of UNESCO's campaign to support educational reconstruction was promoting awareness of the extent of the challenge. In 1947, UNESCO published *The Book of Needs*. Covering fifteen war-devastated countries, the publication had a frontispiece photograph by Doisneau, which later appeared in *Banlieue de Paris* (1949, fig. 5.3.1).⁸⁸ Despite the specificity of such images depicting the plight of individuals in particular towns or cities, the problem of educational reconstruction was from the start articulated as an international one – as a generic, shared challenge. In this it prefigured the universalising of individual experience effected by *The Family of Man* exhibition. In March 1948, next to the image of a starving child under the caption, 'This is a world tragedy', *Courier* ran an article on *The Book of Needs*. Quoting from Huxley's preface, it described the book as 'a bird's-eye-view of the present critical situation'. Again, the question of vision and the 'correct perspective' is used to frame the debate about international cooperation; again, the 'right view' is the aerial, total or global view. Many other UNESCO publications sought to raise awareness, support and funds for educational reconstruction by shaping audiences' attitudes to children and to education in line with the organisation's utopian vision. Seeking to deconstruct or overwrite associations of nationalism and nationality which defined both the wartime period and the tensions of the Cold War, these publications drew heavily on a photography which could evoke a general sense of community through images of specific individuals – that is, an idea of a universal world citizenry composed of individual world citizens, as opposed to numerous groups of citizens of different nations.

Commissioned by UNESCO from Magnum photographer, David Seymour, *Children of Europe* (1949) is an example of this sort of campaigning (fig. 5.3.2). Strikingly different from the majority of other photobooks from the late 1940s which memorialised or aestheticised the ruins (discussed in chapter two), Seymour's images are not empty of human forms. They more closely resemble the humanising vision of the photo-magazines of the early 1950s (discussed in chapter four).⁸⁹ Comprising fifty

⁸⁷ For instance, one pamphlet compiled a list of answers to some of the thorny questions teachers might ask in war-devastated countries (UNESCO, *The Teacher and the Post-war Child in War-devastated Countries* (Paris: UNESCO, 1947)).

⁸⁸ The first volume published covered 15 war-damaged countries (UNESCO, *The Book of Needs* (Paris: UNESCO, 1947)). A second volume focusing on South-East Asia was published in 1949.

⁸⁹ (David Seymour, *Children of Europe* (Paris: UNESCO, 1949)). Seymour was one of the founder members of Magnum Photos and he photographed French and German families for

captioned photographs, *Children of Europe* was originally published in English and French. The photographs are populated by children whose frank stares and desperate situation set the tone for this publication, as well as the numerous other publications and exhibitions in which they appeared.⁹⁰ The first photograph in *Children of Europe* (fig. 5.3.3) shows three boys walking along a road bounded on both sides by rubble. Behind them, dominating the top two thirds of the image, are the jagged walls of what were perhaps former houses. Like the image's composition, the trilingual caption emphasises the devastated urban setting. It reads tersely, 'Millions of children first knew life amid death and destruction'. Through both the ruined setting (fig. 5.3.4) and the children's faces, the images make a direct, emotional appeal to the book's audience. The eyes of the children often stare out from its pages with imploring expressions which meet the viewer's gaze uncompromisingly. In one image, two children turn their empty cups to the camera, questioningly (fig. 5.3.5). These images offer their audiences an invitation to identify with the children pictured and thus work to forge an emotional community as discussed in chapter four (albeit here defined principally through sympathy, rather than the pleasures of escapism or voyeurism). The image of the child functions as a mediator of the idea of the organisation's aims. Through the visual and emotional engagement of the potential viewer, this mediation works to elicit a sense of community and obligation, and thereby encourage support. In a non-trivial sense, photography in the concerned mode gives the organisation a face;

'People are People the World Over' (discussed above) at the same time as carrying out this UNESCO commission (Miller, p. 57).

⁹⁰ In his history of UNESCO published in 1951, Theodore Bestermann, noted that 10,000 copies of *Children of Europe* had already been printed and distributed by that point (Besterman, p. 79). His volume was illustrated with some of Seymour's images. Seymour's photographs were also reproduced frequently in *Courier* and other UNESCO publications. Twenty-three sets of images depicting the situation of child war victims were produced for exhibition and circulated internationally in 1949 (Valderrama, p. 55). It seems likely, given the date, that Seymour's images were included in this exhibition. The organisation of UNESCO archives has made it hard to find out more about the practical details of this commission. At some point, the archives were disaggregated from the original division into departments and services, and reorganised around a set of themes. It has not been possible to locate correspondence relating directly to *Children of Europe* or Seymour's commission. Further information may be retrievable at UNESCO, or perhaps in the archives of Magnum Photos now held at the University of Austin, Texas. However, the points made here regarding the manner in which the linguistic and visual rhetoric of the publication constitutes an address to the audience, pertain even in the absence of a definitive history of the book's publication. Copyright seems to have been retained by UNESCO. These images continued to be used in a large number of UNESCO publications in the following two decades, often without attribution. When a number of them were reproduced in the exhibition and catalogue of *The Family of Man*, they were credited to both Seymour and UNESCO.

the figure of the face performing an invitation to the viewer to identify with the scene depicted and the situation (of need and opportunity implied).⁹¹

Adverts for the book in the UNESCO newsletter on reconstruction, *Impetus*, make clear its function as a fundraising document (figs. 5.3.6 and 5.3.7). The book's emotional appeal, establishing relations between viewer and viewed, reflects this function. Crucially, these relations are based on a one-to-one encounter, not mediated by associations of nation and nationality. While individual national experiences are mentioned the children are never identified solely as particular nationals. They are pictured as children undergoing a common difficult experience, somehow outside national boundaries. They are 'of Europe' – not of France or Austria, of Spain or Greece. The captions echo the address of the images, commanding the viewer's attention by suggesting relationships of responsibility between the children ('we') and the viewer ('you'). One reads, 'Orphaned, abandoned and bombed out ... we struggle to live in the wreckage you have left us'. Likewise, the emotional appeal of the children's faces is seconded by the book's preface. Framed as a letter written by a seventeen-year-old, the text details the experience and the extent of the deprivation suffered by an estimated 13 million children in war-devastated countries of the postwar period: 'the lives of millions of others who were children yesterday and who will be men and women tomorrow without ever having been "young"'.⁹²

The direct, confrontational and emotional work of the entreating expressions and desperate circumstances pictured – in concert with the text – could threaten to alienate the viewer. But ultimately, a positive tone prevails; one of hope comparable to that excavated in the photo-magazines of the period in the preceding chapter. *Children of Europe* charts a transition of the ruined cityscapes, from manifestations of past trauma to sites of potential for a brighter future. Following a visual adumbration of the problems is a tentatively positive turn to the solutions. Images of classes held under a tree or in the shadow of a burnt-out façade illustrate the state of makeshift schooling. Other photos depict children themselves engaged in the work of rebuilding schools

⁹¹ These widely circulated images thus constitute the 'face of UNESCO' – another version of the figure of the face already discussed in reference to propagandising on behalf of modernist architecture (the 'new face of reconstruction') and city images propagated by photo-magazines (the 'face of the city'). Additionally, the title of one of the first exhibitions organised by the Magnum agency was titled, 'Face of the Time' ('Gesicht der Zeit' or 'Visage du Temps'). It toured five Austrian cities, beginning at the Institut Français, Innsbruck in June 1955 (Heine, Coeln and Holzherr, p. 13).

⁹² Seymour, p. 5.

(figs. 5.3.8 and 5.3.9). The privileged solution to the problem is education. The final comment, sandwiched between children dancing on the banks of a river across from new high-rise housing blocks and children's drawings on the back cover, reads: 'Share your world with us. We too shall be grown-up people in a few years. Do not abandon us a second time and make us lose forever our faith in the ideals for which you fought'. Thus, there is a transformation of the meaning of ruins. From a symbol of the trauma visited on the children, to a site where they might rebuild and be rebuilt. Ruined urban space is simultaneously pictured as symbol of the past war and the future state. It exists in a sort of liminal position between the memory of the war and the utopian view of a possible peaceful future. *Children of Europe* demonstrates how, through the image of the child amid the ruins, the conception of children is wrestled away from the nation and put on an international footing. The effort to universalise the image of children as symbols of the future at once promotes a variant of internationalism predicated on recognition or identification between individuals, deftly shelving nationalism and working to void the difficult symbolism of urban space and replace it with a redemptive character.⁹³

Another striking example of the visualisation of de-nationalised or internationalised youth can be found on the cover of a special edition of *Courier*, published to celebrate the organisation's ten year anniversary (fig. 5.3.10) The cover, from December 1956, depicts three children standing in front of a large globe. Curved along one of the lines of longitude is the title, '1946 -1956: Ten Years of UNESCO'.⁹⁴ The photograph offers three ways of seeing the questions of youth and education in an internationalist context. First and most basically, it suggests there exists a relation between 'the youth question' and the international community through the straightforward juxtaposition of the one (symbolised by the three children) with the other (symbolised by the globe). Articles in this edition cover the issue of youth and education in detail, reporting that, 'For every ten children in the world, five (i.e. over 250,000,000) have no schools, four complete only a few years of elementary schooling and only one has an opportunity for secondary or higher education, according to the

⁹³ This negotiation or 'emptying out' of wartime associations from urban space is comparable to that achieved through the many urban spectacles pictured on the pages of the illustrated press. Likewise, the same fascination with the capacities of the camera exhibited by photo-magazines was evident when Seymour's images were reproduced in *Courier*. The accompanying text foregrounded the medium through interjections such as, 'A photographer highlights the drama of post-war youngsters' and 'Through the eye of the camera' ('These are Children of Europe', *UNESCO Courier*, 2 (1949), 6-9).

⁹⁴ *UNESCO Courier*, 12 (1956).

World Survey of Education, published by UNESCO in 1955'.⁹⁵ Secondly, the cover offers a vision of children outside the confines of one nation or another. They are literally removed from any particular geographic – and hence national – ties. Thirdly, the image also works to transfer positive associations from the gaze of the children to the internationalist perspective. The children are looking at the globe. They have the much vaunted global perspective. At the same time they represent hope, potential and the future. The viewer's gaze shares the same object; the person picking up the magazine also sees the world in its entirety. In that shared object of vision is the possibility of a transfer of the positive associations which the children carry, to the internationalist perspective that the viewer shares. The internationalist perspective and the UNESCO vision are viewed as hopeful and positive; one which offers potential for the future.⁹⁶

Yet, while these visualisations work to internationalise the question of youth, the youth depicted are specific individuals. The European children in Seymour's volume and the American children on the cover of *Courier* (in front of the Babson Institute of Business Administration in Wellesley, Massachusetts) obviously present a partial view of the world's youth. Like the *Human Rights Exhibition Album*, there is a Western bias in the representations used in the campaigns regarding educational reconstruction. White children in urban settings dominate. The example of the special edition of *Photo-Monde* already discussed ('Today's children – Tomorrow's citizens') exhibits the same partiality. Despite the manner in which questions of youth and education are placed on an international footing by the title, the publication remains in a world of very specific relations between specific nation states. The list of photographers, for instance, is dominated by Europeans. The languages of the publication – as with *Children of*

⁹⁵ UNESCO *Courier*, 12 (1956), p. 26.

⁹⁶ Yet importantly, while the viewer might share the same object of vision with the child and thus hopeful and positive allusions, the point of view offered to the magazine's audience avoids the association of being childish. Unlike the youngsters, the audience is offered an elevated perspective – the enlightened view from above. In the preface to another UNESCO publication the author made a similar rhetorical gesture, endowing the child with an artist's perspective, but making sure to distinguish the latter from the former: 'Civilizations are remembered by their culture. In the relentless record of time a few fragments of carving and pottery or engravings on wood and stone are enough to evoke a picture of a pattern of life long since vanished. Artists create images significant of their time and place, yet universal and timeless. Young children are endowed with the gift of seeing the world about them intuitively, with an innocent freshness as yet unaffected by the rational dictates of experience. This natural ability is akin to the visual awareness of the artist, although it may be less conscious' (Edwin Ziegfeld, *Education and Art: A Symposium* (Paris: UNESCO, 1952), p. 9). Again, this comparison of ways of seeing allows a transfer of the positive attributes of the child to the artist, yet it has to be contained or negotiated. The text steers the reader away from the allusion that the artist is in some way childish, endowing the artist with consciousness of their 'visual awareness' lacking in the child.

Europe and the majority of UNESCO publications in its first few years – are the three main colonial languages. The internationalist perspective is again indelibly marked by pre-war world history (colonialism) and postwar circumstances (the dominance of transatlantic nations in the field of cultural production). Alongside an internationalist perspective on questions of youth and education, there was a privileging of Western and urban modes of existence in the visualizing of these problems. Again, internationalism spills over into universalism and photography is implicated in the process.

Singh argues that, 'Education comes before everything else at UNESCO'.⁹⁷ Certainly, wartime education debates were the genesis of the organisation's establishment. Following the establishment of UNESCO, many of the National Committees which formed the bridge between the organisation in Paris and the governments of the various member states were invariably affiliated to government departments of education. However, the inspirational vision of an internationalist future articulated in wartime met certain real-world obstacles in the first postwar years. It was not until UNESCO's General Conference of Beirut in 1949, for instance, that member states decided to 'extend parts of UNESCO's programme to Germany and Japan'.⁹⁸ The first West German delegates to attend a UNESCO event were present at the International Conference of Adult Education in Elsinor in June of the same year.⁹⁹ It was not until 11 July 1951 that West Germany became a UNESCO member state. This is another of the many complexities and inconsistencies discernible between the one-world ideal and the organisation's early campaigns. The exclusion of West Germany ran parallel with the promotion of world citizenship in the organisation's visual culture, exemplified in Seymour's images, which worked to recruit audiences to an internationalist perspective by promoting identification with individuals through photography. The emphasis on the internationalised youth of tomorrow can be viewed as a reaction to a moment of increasing tension between polarised nations. It was much more the visual expression of a deeply-felt desire than it was the depiction of a reality. In this, it was a moral judgment against nationalism and so met the challenge Morgenthau set when he defined the international community as 'a community of moral judgments and political actions'. This is why the affective and humanising mode of 'concerned photography' exemplified by Seymour's photographs was to play a more

⁹⁷ Singh, p. 46.

⁹⁸ UNESCO, *UNESCO: A World Programme* (Paris: UNESCO, 1949), p. 17.

⁹⁹ Valderrama, p. 56.

prominent part in the picturing of human rights issues than the image of a universal world culture. Notwithstanding the contradictions in such an image for a member state organisation operating in a Cold War context, the viewing of youth as an international concern on which the future depended was projected as a cornerstone of world understanding.

Children of Europe (like *The Family of Man* exhibition, in which a number of Seymour's images of children were reproduced, including fig. 5.3.11) did for people what the *Human Rights Exhibition Album* did for culture – it collapsed differences and offered instead an image of 'oneness'. As did urbanism and architecture in publications like the *Human Rights Exhibition Album*, in publications like *Children of Europe* the issue of youth underwent a transmutation through photographic representation and its universalising tendency. Despite the turbulent past and the difficult present of both, youth and urbanism emerge in the discourse of reconstruction as fetishised ideals, held to have a special capability or position in the realisation of a harmonious and internationalist future. This combination of internationalism and universalism, and the consequent privileging of Western and urban modes of existence, is also reflected in UNESCO's modernist headquarters project which spanned the 1950s.

5.4 *Building Images: The UNESCO Headquarters as Photographic Architecture*

Perhaps we should make a place for the individual building as a space of utopian investment, that monumental part which cannot be the whole and yet attempts to express it.

Fredric Jameson¹⁰⁰

Like any institutional or corporate head office, the UNESCO headquarters project was part of a campaign to project a particular image of the organisation. On 14 April 1955, the third Director-General of UNESCO, American Luther H. Evans, posed for the cameras on the former site of cavalry barracks on Place de Fontenoy. This was the ceremonial groundbreaking for the headquarters project. Discussion regarding the creation of a purpose-built headquarters had begun around 1950. In 1951, an advisory panel of five architects from different countries was established, including Le Corbusier and Walter Gropius.¹⁰¹ The two architects (Marcel Breuer and Bernhard Zehruss) and one engineer (Pier Luigi Nervi) who would design the final building were appointed in 1952. In the end, after significant and sustained disputes on most elements from the location to the design of the building, the new headquarters was official opened during an inaugural ceremony on 3 November 1958.¹⁰² While the UNESCO constitution of 1945 spoke of harmony and cooperation, the construction of the organisation's headquarters was the source of disunity. In the introduction to a collection of photographs of the building taken by Lucien Hervé, French architectural historian Françoise Choay gave an insight into the strength of feeling surrounding this debacle when she ruminated on how future audiences might view the building:

¹⁰⁰ Fredric Jameson, *Archaeologies of the Future: The Desire Called Utopia and Other Science Fictions* (London: Verso, 2005), p. 4.

¹⁰¹ The other members of the panel were Lucio Costa (Brasil), Sven Markelius (Sweden) and Ernesto Rogers (Italy). Additionally, Eero Saarinen (US) was involved in the project on a consultative basis.

¹⁰² The dramatic and detailed story of the building's construction – from the first designs by Eugène Beaudouin, Eero Saarinen and Howard Robertson, to the tensions resulting from Le Corbusier's involvement which led to his refusal to attend the inauguration – is told in Christopher Pearson, *Designing UNESCO: Art, Architecture and International Politics at Mid-Century* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2010).

When the visitor of the year 2000 arrives at the Place de Fontenoy, where Unesco Headquarters now stand, the sight of the building will astonish him no more than that of the Military School and the Eiffel Tower [...]. Our visitor will have acquired the detachment that comes only from perspective in time. At present Unesco Headquarters has given rise to more controversy than any other structure in France.¹⁰³

This controversy entailed a public debate persisting throughout the years of conception, design and construction. It was especially heated in France, with articles published in *Touring Club de France* on the 'bizarre' design and rejoinders by Zehrfuss in *Architecture d'aujourd'hui*.¹⁰⁴ The references by Choay to the architectural icons of Paris (the École Militaire and the Eiffel Tower) and the imagined future visitor give some indication of the battle lines in this controversy. Those affronted by the addition to the historic Paris skyline of a multi-storey modernist structure pitted themselves against those who saw the building as the expression of the future-focused renewal of the postwar moment and an apposite symbol of UNESCO's humanist ideals.

It might seem paradoxical that the organisation behind the 1954 Hague Convention (which sought to protect cultural heritage in the event of war) should – at around the same time – commission an imposing and controversial complex of modernist buildings for a site at the end of the Champ de Mars. Especially since this construction project entailed the destruction of barracks on the Place de Fontenoy designed by Jacques Gabriel who built the École Militaire in the mid-eighteenth century. However, this apparent contradiction between preservationism on the one hand, and modernism on the other, needs to be understood in the light of the preceding discussion regarding UNESCO and questions of cultural memory and utopian thinking. The organisation did not hold protection of the past and future-focused thinking to be mutually exclusive. Rather, it sought to negotiate a balance between the two, to mobilise a shared heritage in the pursuit of a harmonious future. As discussed, urban space and architecture were a recurrent focus or preoccupation in publications which

¹⁰³ Françoise Choay, 'Introduction', Lucien Hervé, *Unesco Headquarters in Paris* (Stuttgart: Gerd Hatje, 1958), p. vi. A French language edition of this souvenir book of architectural photographs was also published: Lucien Hervé, *Le Siège De l'Unesco à Paris* (Paris: Editions Freal, 1958). Pearson notes it was also published simultaneously in West Germany and the United States (Pearson, p. 316).

¹⁰⁴ André Defert, 'L'UNESCO, future mal logée', *Revue du Touring Club de France*, 643 (1954); Bernard Zehrfuss, 'À Propos du nouveau siège de l'UNESCO à Paris (Réponse de B. Zehrfuss à A. Defert)', *Architecture d'aujourd'hui*, 56 (1954), p. xxi; cited by Pearson, pp. 202–203.

sought to negotiate this relation between past- and future-focused thinking. Thus, to understand the apparent paradox of the UNESCO headquarters, it is necessary to grasp the organisation's position between cultural memory and utopian thinking. The Hague Convention and the headquarters building *look both ways*. The convention sought to preserve artefacts of the past from destruction, conserving them for future generations. The organisation aimed, in the headquarters' design and execution, to give expression to this future-oriented stance. It also sought to fashion a monument to the organisation's utopian peace aims and a memorial to the internationalist ideals held to be crucial in the Allied victory. Encapsulating this dual aspect of the headquarters building, Le Corbusier described it as Janus-faced, 'because it can be said to look back in time on the Place-de-Fontenoy façade, where traditional, planar cladding was used [...] in respectful reverence to the Ecole Militaire, while its other two elevations are rather more futuristic.'¹⁰⁵

An illustrative example of how the image of the organisation and the building are closely connected can be found in the ten-year anniversary edition of *Courier*. Fig. 5.4.1 shows a double page spread from an article which recorded the impressions of the three Directors-General (Huxley, Torres Bodet and Evans) after a decade of UNESCO.¹⁰⁶ On the left is Herbert Mason's image of St Paul's Cathedral during the Blitz of London, where UNESCO was first based. In the centre is an image of the Hôtel Majestic, UNESCO's temporary home after it first moved to Paris in 1946. On the right is the new headquarters under construction. Mason's image of St Paul's here represents the war as a whole and its attendant destruction which gave the impetus to UNESCO's foundation. At the same time, the notions of resilience this iconic image evokes are in turn transferred to UNESCO.¹⁰⁷ The temporary headquarters building at Avenue Kléber had been requisitioned and occupied by the Nazis until 1944, but in this image, shown festooned with an array of national flags, it is re-appropriated and re-inscribed.¹⁰⁸ Finally, the new headquarters suggest a making permanent of the ideals of the organisation; literally, a concretisation of its efforts. In all three instances, the

¹⁰⁵ Andrew Ayers, *The Architecture of Paris* (Stuttgart: Edition Axel Menges, 2004), p. 142.

¹⁰⁶ Julian Huxley, Jaime Torres Bodet and Luther H. Evans, 'UNESCO's First Ten Years', *UNESCO Courier*, 11 (1958) 4-5

¹⁰⁷ One history of the organisation includes a facsimile said to be of the original constitution's cover which appears to bear Mason's image (Valderrama, p. 9). It has not been possible to confirm this use of the iconic photograph.

¹⁰⁸ After 1944, the building was first used by the United States and then the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration (UNRRA) before it became UNESCO's temporary headquarters (Besterman, p. 4).

buildings stand for something larger and more abstract, be it resilience, victory or permanence. Various acts of iconoclasm and re-inscription are achieved through these representations. The three images trace an arc from war to peace in which architectural imagery is mobilised to convey both destruction by various nationalisms and the triumphant construction of the internationalist ideal. As in Seymour's *Children of Europe*, urban photography thus functions to enable a transition from the trauma of war to the articulation of hope and recovery. The headquarters building, through its association with these other images and their symbolism, becomes a space of both mnemonic significance and utopian investment. In turn, the values and ideas conjured by the building's image are transferred to the organisation and its objectives: the headquarters are that 'monumental part which cannot be the whole yet attempts to express it'.¹⁰⁹

At the same time as managing this relation with the past war, representations of the headquarters engaged with the current controversy about the building. The images in the book of Hervé's photographs – published in all three comparator countries – are a good example of how this was pursued. Hervé's photography of the building *in situ* worked to integrate the modernist headquarters into the historic townscape of Paris and thus overcome criticisms of impropriety of form. The building is woven into the fabric of the city by being pictured in proximity to other traditional landmarks. The first image (fig. 5.4.2) is of the view down the Champ de Mars from the Eiffel Tower. The final image (fig. 5.4.3) shows the building bounded on either side by the Eiffel Tower and Les Invalides. The integration of the futurist building into the historic cityscape has both a spatial and a temporal dimension, as Barthes suggested when, in 1960, he wrote about the view from the Eiffel Tower:

Certain modern monuments [...] are beginning to set signs of the future within [...] the space [of the city]; the Tower permits harmonizing these unaccommodated substances (glass, metal), these new forms, with the stones and domes of the past; Paris, in its duration, under the Tower's gaze, composes itself like an abstract canvas in which dark oblongs (derived from a very old past) are contiguous with the white rectangles of modern architecture.¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁹ Jameson, p. 4.

¹¹⁰ Barthes, pp. 236–250 (p. 245).

As Barthes' terminology makes plain, photography such as Hervé's facilitates an accommodation of modernist architecture in the historic townscape, a harmonising of utopian thinking and cultural memory. Note the monochrome character of Barthes' description. His essay could have been written as a commentary for Hervé's book. Indeed, he specifically referenced the UNESCO headquarters.¹¹¹

Hervé's images, and others like them, circulated widely in the comparator nations and internationally, illustrating the many press articles which commented on the Paris opening (figs. 5.4.4 to 5.4.7). These publicity photographs frequently situated the modernist building in the city's historic townscape. Sarah Williams Goldhagen has claimed of later buildings created for internationalist organisations or international corporations that they were constructed principally with their image and not their users in mind.¹¹² Arguing that the second half of the twentieth century saw the construction of monumental structures whose guiding design principle was their appearance as two-dimensional representation, not their use as three-dimensional space, Williams Goldhagen cites Brasilia and the World Trade Centre as key examples. She asserts that the postwar world brought a greater emphasis to the consumption of the building by audiences distant in space – be that architects through the architectural press, or the wider public through the sorts of architectural guidebooks (both discussed in chapter three). For international organisations and global corporations alike, the building now reached a far broader audience. UNESCO, likewise, was from the outset a building made visible around the world. While the actual number of users was limited, it had a global audience of potential spectators who accessed the building visually through its photographic reproduction. This dissemination of the image of the building – which is also an image of the organisation – fed off the UNESCO conception of photography as particularly suited to its diplomatic objectives. Through images, viewers could share in the UNESCO ideal enabled by the visual culture the organisation promoted: The headquarters in its Parisian locale offered a vision of both the common cultural heritage of mankind and a modern, international future. In short, through the 'universal language' of photography, this building in the International Style was made available to the organisation's global constituency.

¹¹¹ Barthes essay appeared as the preface to another book of photographs: André Martin, *La Tour Eiffel* (Paris: Delpire, 1964).

¹¹² Sarah Williams Goldhagen, 'Monumentality in the Pictorial Still', in *Architecture Between Spectacle and Use*, ed. by Anthony Vidler (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008), pp. 89–106.

The headquarters project represents the assimilation of modernism into UNESCO's conception of a common cultural heritage. Through this building, it was effectively canonised.¹¹³ Architectural modernism was thought to be both forward-looking and universal. It made use of technological advances. It avoided ornamentation, which might smack of nationalist and divisive traditions. It was a pared-down, hi-tech style appropriate to an internationalist era. This was part of the definitive re-engineering of modernist architecture achieved in the postwar era. Architectural photography, as elaborated in chapter three, helped to 'empty modern architecture of its original radical social dimension'.¹¹⁴ Nathaniel Coleman has argued that:

Over-institutionalization of modern architecture during the postwar period included conventionalization of its processes and expression. By emphasizing objectivity, economy, and efficiency (adult) virtues, while moving away from its original (youthful) social reformist position, modern architecture became tamed enough to be embraced as an appropriate means to house and represent state-bureaucracies and corporations globally.¹¹⁵

This transition gave rise to an uneasy tension between the characteristics of the building and the building as symbol – between, for instance, the efficiency of building and *the image of efficiency*. This tension between functionalism and symbolism can be discerned in the editorial to the special edition of *Courier* in November 1958 which celebrated the opening of the new headquarters. The reader is informed that the design is 'functional' and driven by 'efficiency', not a 'formal aesthetic'; and yet, they are also informed of the symbolic function of the building: 'Today Unesco possesses a home of its own in Paris, a headquarters commensurate with its needs and with the goals it has set itself. This is a building which rests on something more than its foundations of concrete for it harbours some of the noblest hopes of man'.¹¹⁶ The

¹¹³ Discussing the West German Bundeshaus – another official building with a transnational constituency of spectators – Michael Z. Wise wrote of the 'official canonization of what had become a transatlantic architectural idiom' (Michael Z. Wise, *Capital Dilemma: Germany's Search for a New Architecture of Democracy* (Princeton: Princeton Architectural Press, 1998), p. 29).

¹¹⁴ Nathaniel Coleman, *Utopias and Architecture* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2005), p. 96.

¹¹⁵ Coleman, p. 96.

¹¹⁶ *UNESCO Courier*, 11 (1958), p. 3. Likewise, Choay wrote somewhat contradictorily that 'the architecture of the new Unesco Headquarters is marked by its "freedom", which is manifested by its wealth of forms [... and] its concern with "strict economy of material"' (Hervé, p. ix).

tension between the functional and efficient image the organisation (and architects) wanted to project, and the symbolic and aesthetic elements of architecture, marked the majority of publications which depicted the building at the time of its inauguration.

The headquarters project is another example of postwar photographic architecture. It is a building the conception and design of which was thoroughly entwined with the practice of photographic representation, shaped by it and produced with it in mind. This is exemplified in Hervé's images which offer the building as a visual artefact to be enjoyed, rather than a space to inhabit. Parts of the building are made to represent the whole. The viewing audience is presented not with the image of architecture readily comprehensible as a space to inhabit; it is a flattened image of space, reduced to two dimensions and stressing form over volume. The viewer is not invited to imagine themselves occupying the space – walking through it, projecting themselves into it. They are invited to appreciate the detailing or the aesthetic attributes of the building. For instance, the cover of Hervé's book (fig. 5.4.8) shows the striking concrete façade of the conference centre, taken from an oblique angle. Other photographs showing exterior and interior spaces are transected by shadows or else dominated by striking compositions (figs. 5.4.9 and 5.4.10). The photographs share an abstract quality which facilitates the symbolic suggestion of efficiency and functionalism by distancing the building from its existence as a three-dimensional, occupied space – a symbolism reinforced by the inclusion of unlabelled architectural drawings. Hervé's photographs thus render the UNESCO building as form so as to imbue it more readily with meaning. That many of the images are unoccupied can be seen as part of the same enhancement of symbolism and effacement of the three-dimensional or haptic qualities of the building.

Like the *Human Rights Exhibition Album* and *Children of Europe*, photographic representation of the UNESCO building exhibits the manner in which visual material and visual metaphors were formative influences on the work of the organisation, its conception of internationalism, and the image it projected through its publications in its first decade. The viscosity of architecture and the status of the UNESCO project as a utopian vision were explicitly tied together in Choay's text which asserted that the building 'looks forward to the world of tomorrow'. Indeed, discussing in Corbusian terms how the architecture of the headquarters building utilised 'the play of light in space', Choay compared the building's glass façade to the action of a camera. She attributed to it the capacity to 'capture, in singularly poetic fashion, the shifting image of the

clouds'.¹¹⁷ This metaphor of the building as camera or optical instrument demonstrates the 'interpermeation' of photography and architecture in the postwar moment. What is more, the notion of this particular building as an image-making device suggests how thoroughly entwined postwar conceptions of internationalism were with questions of visibility and the built environment. The vision of UNESCO projected in the image of its headquarters belied an ocularcentric stance not simply in relation to architecture but also its objectives, its audience and the task of facilitating peaceful international relations with which it was charged.

The UNESCO headquarters displayed the flags of its 81 member states on when it opened on 3 November 1958, but this image of the building was a gloss on a more complex reality. The editorial to the special edition of the *Courier* asserted that 'The international character of its construction becomes visible the moment one crosses its threshold'. However, apart from Brazilian Lucio Costa, members of the design team were all from Europe or the United States. While some member states were invited to decorate rooms, again this amounted to a principally transatlantic input.¹¹⁸ Likewise, the art works commissioned for the building were predominantly by European artists. Moreover, while the same editorial suggested that 'as the buildings rose to join the Paris skyline, the tongues of many nations were heard among the workers and craftsmen on the site', 80% of these workers were North-African economic migrants.¹¹⁹ In short, the project was less inclusive than the 'international' label suggests. It was a project and a building with a specific history and location. As instantiated by this modernist monument for a global audience, the 'internationalist perspective' was unavoidably the view from a specific time and place. Paris, in Hervé's images and many others, was meant to stand as a world city. But the suggestion that specific views of this Western European city might represent a general world civilisation reveals once more the Eurocentric genealogy and urban pre-occupation of the UNESCO project. Considering the 'individual building as a space of utopian investment', as Jameson directs, we see this part also reflects this same broader point about UNESCO and its early campaigns.

¹¹⁷ Hervé, p. viii–ix.

¹¹⁸ In addition to France and West Germany, rooms in the building were decorated by the United States, Italy, Netherlands, Sweden and Switzerland.

¹¹⁹ Pearson notes that there was an influx of temporary workers to the French capital owing to the number of reconstruction projects underway by this time (Pearson, p. 211).

The institutional context of the building's opening at the end of the 1950s was very different to that when discussion of a purpose-built headquarters began at the decade's start. The terms in which Evans talked about the headquarters are indicative of a shift to a more conservative internationalism:

Here is Unesco's Headquarters, the House of its Member States. An emanation of the will of many peoples, the outcome of a combination of many skills and much hard work, may this building, by the massive sobriety of its architecture, abide for all beholders as a symbol of peace, unity and confidence.¹²⁰

The emphasis on the Member States is indicative of a self-conscious shift under Evans' directorship from the proliferation of ambitious and (it was claimed by detractors) amorphous projects, to more restrained and realistic initiatives. Within this framework, a focus on a third area of activity emerged in addition to the clearing house and norm-setting function which UNESCO pursued in its first decade: international development. It focused on the distribution to sovereign nations states – whose number was greatly increasing – of technical and financial support. The privileging of western urban modes of existence in the visual culture of UNESCO takes on a particular importance in this context.

¹²⁰ Cited in Hervé, *Unesco Headquarters in Paris*, p. v. Evans' comments were an extract from his speech at the inauguration of the building, 2 November 1958.

5.5 Conclusion: Photography and Internationalism in the Public Sphere

The historian Charles Mozaré, in an article titled, 'Our Multiplying Cities: The Swift-Changing Map of Urban Development', drew an explicit link between the city and civilisation. Beginning his article by asking, 'What is civilization?' he goes on:

Is it not true that most of the magnificent and fascinating objects of the past that draw millions of ordinary people to museums every year have come from sites which bear the marks of organized communities? [...] urban centres have been so singularly important in the development of human intercommunication, in the elaboration of such great instruments as languages, systems of numeration, calendars, the tools of countless trades, and in the creation of works of art (whether for religion or just for the sake of plain beauty) that one can well ask if the history of the development of cities is not practically synonymous with the history of the development of civilizations.¹²¹

Mozaré's article contends that the growth in the number and scale of cities in the past 150 years is 'a revolutionary development and marks a stage in man's history as important as were the metal age and the alphabet at the dawn of civilization'.¹²² The article is illustrated by maps showing the relative size of urban centres in 1800, 1900 and 1950, and includes an aerial photograph of New York – the same aerial photograph which was used at the beginning of Sert's, *Can Our Cities Survive?* (1942).¹²³ Reproduced in *Courier*, the photograph bore the same caption: 'The New Perspective: Air views reveal a new urban "façade". Here is no individual building, street or neighbourhood, but the whole city, and with it a revelation of its composition'. Again, photography provides the 'correct perspective' on a given topic – a point of view (as suggested by the recurrence of this image) shared by both the historian and the architect-planner.

¹²¹ Charles Mozaré, 'Our Multiplying Cities: The Swift-Changing Map of Urban Development', *UNESCO Courier*, 2 (1954), 18-21 (p. 19).

¹²² (Mozaré, 18-21 (p. 19)). This correlation between a given historical moment and technology or means of communication is insightful. A correlate, unstated by Mozaré, for what he might term the urban age is arguably photography.

¹²³ Sert, p. 2.

The article describes the forthcoming UNESCO-sponsored 'History of Mankind' project, which the reader is told 'will seek to present the scientific and cultural story of the world, free from national bias, and show the efforts of the men and peoples who fashioned the tools of modern society'.¹²⁴ Like the aerial view, such a history is a totalising vision which seeks to bring together the seemingly disparate elements of a phenomenon into a unified whole. A total history and the aerial photograph are both proxies for postwar internationalism: They represent the assumed benefit of rising above the perspective of a particular nation state or national interest. This chapter has argued that photography not only served as an important means of representation for various internationalist approaches, it also helped craft what was felt to be the task of international relations in the postwar world – that is, the promotion of an internationalist perspective. It is not coincidental that aerial photography is used in Mozaré's discussion of the 'History of Mankind' project. The notion of photography as a 'universal language' able to overcome barriers of borders, languages and even illiteracy implicates it in the conception of this universal project. While Mozaré's article and its visualisations position the western city somewhat ambiguously as both the high-point of civilization and also a problematic space which needs planning and control in the second half of the twentieth century, it is underpinned by the uncritical assumption that civilisation's future is to be found in cities. The role of the city remains unchallenged in this historical trajectory from past to future. The use of this image in *Courier* shows again that, despite the rhetoric of internationalism and universality, the future-focused, affective appeal of UNESCO's vision of the postwar world carried with it a fascination with or an ineradicable element of a Western European perspective, alongside a preoccupation with urbanism as an indicator of progress.

Current historiography of postwar internationalism – whether focused on the establishment of the UN, the human rights agenda, UNESCO's global history project, the efforts of the UNRRA or the situation of children in the postwar world – addresses shared concerns.¹²⁵ It tackles the various overlapping and (sometimes) contradictory internationalisms which sought to address the question of international cooperation and human welfare in the postwar period, distinguished by the manner in which these

¹²⁴ Mozaré was a member of the faculty of the Institute of Political Studies at the University of Paris and editor of the UNESCO-sponsored *Journal of World History* (Poul Duedahl, 'Selling Mankind: UNESCO and the Invention of Global History, 1945-1976', *Journal of World History*, 22 (2011), 101–133).

¹²⁵ Mazower, *No Enchanted Palace*; Stefan-Ludwig Hoffmann; Zahra; Duedahl, 101–133; Jessica Reinisch, 'Internationalism in Relief: The Birth (and Death) of UNRRA', *Past & Present*, 210 (2011), 258–289.

approaches defined the international community (whether as a community of nations, a quasi-commonwealth with a hierarchy of nations or a community of individuals). This is connected to the conception of the nation in international relations in a historical moment marked by the aftermath of war, Cold War tensions, and the processes and wars of decolonisation. In short, was the nation state and nationality felt to be something to be promoted or negotiated? The recreation of an international public sphere after the failure of the League of Nations in the years prior to the Second World War is also a recurring problematic in the historiography of postwar internationalism, along with the debate about the proper plane for internationalist organisations to become involved in questions of human welfare – norm-setting (like the Universal Declaration of Human Rights), the provision of technical advice (like many of UNESCO's mass communications initiatives), or the provision of development aid (as became more central to the work of UNESCO into the 1960s and beyond)? This study of UNESCO's use of photography in a selection of campaigns from the first years of its operation has traversed these central concerns. What it adds to the debate is essential reflection on the competing conceptions of internationalism and the role photography played in various universalising discourses of the postwar moment.

A comprehensive history of the visual culture of UNESCO in its first decade would have to cast the net wider than has been possible here, including topics such as the promotion by UNESCO of art in its humanist project, the debate about visual aids in primary education, and the work of the organisation in the field of science. What has been prioritised here, however, is the vital part played by photographic representation (in general) and urban photography (in particular) in shaping the aims of UNESCO and animating its campaigns. In the organisation's first decade, UNESCO publications instrumentalised images in the pursuit of 'world understanding': the photography of diverse cultural artefacts were employed to synthesise all cultures into the image of one 'world culture'; pictures of children were mobilised to create an image of an international youth, with which an audience could identify and being interpellated into 'world citizenship'; the image of a functional and 'international' architectural style was used to create the image of a space in which questions of human welfare could be tackled outside the narrow perspectives of individual nations. This photography existed in a dynamic relation between the visualisation of the past and a vision for the future. Yet, this marshalling of photographs of artefacts, individuals and architecture was less the valuable use of a 'universal language' suited to the needs of UNESCO than the covert universalising of certain values in the pursuit of UNESCO's effort to build peace.

In other words, photography was not a transparent window or an impassive mirror; UNESCO's many 'image-over-text'¹²⁶ publications persistently privileged a Western perspective on the key issues of the postwar period.

UNESCO's instrumentalisation of photography in its early publishing output was not the sole attitude to photography discussed in UNESCO-sponsored events. In 1955, the *Rencontres Internationales de Genève* organised the tenth of their annual debates around the question, 'Is culture in peril?'¹²⁷ In a lecture titled 'Language and Images' on 12 September 1955, the novelist and curator at Paris' Petit Palais, André Chamson, explored what he felt were the dramatic implications of photography's penetration of culture.¹²⁸ He saw the postwar moment as an intensification of concerns, arguing that Europeans already lived in a universe of images before the war, even if it took the war to make this apparent. He argued that one of the defining characteristics of the decade after the war had been a remarkable and unparalleled public hunger for images,¹²⁹ as evidenced by record exhibition attendance figures. Moreover, he suggested that the invention of photography marked a radical shift in the nature of society's self-representation and self-conception. Viewing the medieval period as one in which language and image held equal footing in the processes of self-articulation by society, he diagnosed a change with the invention of the printing press and the advent of the early modern period, in which language came to be the dominant means of expression. The invention of photography superseded this, precipitating a culture and a self-representation dominated by images.¹³⁰ This new mode of apprehending culture,

¹²⁶ Stuart Hall, 71–120 (p. 75).

¹²⁷ Billed as, 'A discussion on the modern media of communication press, films, radio and television', the 10 day event brought together 80 intellectuals from across Europe and consisted of 6 lectures and 9 round-table discussions. Somewhat improbably, the organizing committee was chaired by the appropriately-named, Professor Antony Babel.

¹²⁸ Chamson spoke primarily about the role of photography in relation to art and its comprehension, but his reflections shade over into a broader conception of culture and into photography's impact on a shared way of viewing the world. By the end of his argument, Chamson's notion of culture seems to encompass both artworks and a shared way of life (Chamson, pp. 79–102).

¹²⁹ 'l'intérêt passionné du public pour l'image. Une des marques de notre époque, c'est cette sorte de raz de marée qui déferle sur l'humanité (Chamson, p. 83).

¹³⁰ To illustrate this hypothesis, he refers to his own relation to culture, recalling that the book was the main means for apprehending culture when he was a boy. While these may have been illustrated, Chamson added, the image was always servant to the text. This relation, he contended has now been reversed such that books are produced in which the image dominates and leads production, with writers being called in to pen a text that is servant to the image ('le livre se trouve envahi par l'image. L'image joue à égalité avec le langage dans les pages du livre. Je dirai même qu'est né et se multiplie déjà un livre de type nouveau, qui est un livre

Chamson argued, results not in the unification through world understanding, but rather a fracturing of the world.¹³¹ In spite of the radical capability of bringing together cultures and objects distant in time and space, photography does not facilitate intercultural appreciation. It merely replicates the world without adding to our understanding of it.¹³² The risk faced by existing histories of postwar internationalism is that, without excavating the discursive formations in which photography circulated and the shift in self-representation which Chamson held this constituted, the implications of visual culture to the postwar internationalist project goes unrecognised.

The arguments above are not intended as an iconoclastic attack on internationalism, on UNESCO, on human rights or on the importance of children in post-conflict situations. In an important sense, the 'internationalist perspective' instantiated by Willkie's aerial view and UNESCO's use of photography is *only* a metaphor. The achievements in the pursuit of this perspective in the postwar period (the effort at educational reconstruction, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights) should not be undermined by the revelation of this metaphor. At the same time, its examination shows the way in which ways of seeing were fundamental to the early work of UNESCO. The various attendant prejudices and preoccupations need excavating, not ignoring or glossing over. The internationalist perspective remains a vital element of international relations and a commitment to looking at questions of human welfare in relation to international cooperation must remain the most appropriate manner in which to address crucial issues of rights, education and post-conflict reconstruction. Universal access to such fundamental concerns is distinct from the universal values which might cut across the implementation of such agendas. Questioning the latter is not synonymous with rejecting the former. The task remains to ensure efforts towards international cooperation in the twenty-first century are disentangled from the range of biases of the postwar period which privileged western and urban modes of existence over others, demonstrated in the permeation of internationalist thinking with questions of vision and visibility.

d'images, sur lequel on demande quelquefois à des écrivains de faire un texte, mais où le texte est devenu le serviteur de l'image' (Chamson, p. 86).

¹³¹ 'Ce nouveau monde d'images a ceci de particulier qu'il n'est plus un reflet de l'esprit. Il est une sorte d'effraction de l'univers faite avant que nous ayons pu penser à ce que cette effraction va nous donner' (Chamson, p. 192).

¹³² 'le caractère spécifique des images que nous donne la photographie. Sa fonction semble être d'élargir l'univers au milieu duquel nous vivons, et non pas de nous mettre en contact avec un univers dont nous avons déjà pris la mesure et que nous avons pensé avant de le représenter plastiquement' (Chamson, p. 93).

The various internationalisms of yesterday and today are perhaps uniquely susceptible to various forms of universalism, given the recourse to visual material to overcome barriers of nation, language and illiteracy. Photography and other image-making processes, with their purported transparency, play a complicated role in promoting such universalisms. But it is not enough simply to unmask this role. It is necessary to understand the presumption of a 'correct way of seeing' the problems of human welfare in the postwar world which underpin the notions of world understanding, world culture, world citizenship, and even the International Style. Explicit debate within UNESCO became sensitised to these issues over the period under consideration here. As evidenced by the contrast between Huxley's one-world ideal and Torres Bodet's broader conception of intercultural understanding, a unified or uniform internationalism did not exist within the organisation in its first decade. Rather, in its early years, UNESCO grappled with the contradictory and overlapping internationalisms and related questions of the importance of the nation state, the creation of an international public sphere, and the persistence of conflict in the postwar moment. This intellectual history cannot be overlooked, but such debate has not been the focus here. The visual culture promoted by the organisation has been examined in detail, because 'words are never enough'. This phrase comes from a 1943 editorial in *Life* explaining the decision to break with convention and print George Strock's photograph of three dead American soldiers on Buna Beach, New Guinea (fig. 5.5.1) – an image later included in the *Human Rights Exhibition Album*.¹³³ John G. Morris (wartime picture editor at *Life*, postwar picture editor at *Ladies Home Journal* and subsequently Executive Editor at Magnum) quoted these words in discussion of *The Family of Man* exhibition, adding 'Think about that a moment when you think about *The Family of Man*.' His comment should act as a directive for the broader scope of research into postwar internationalism. It is not enough to study the words. We need also to attend to the visual culture of the period and its capacities to influence debates, ways of seeing and ways of thinking. This visual culture (overlooked, for instance, by Winter who stresses the importance of 'contemporary conditions and language'¹³⁴) is as much a part of the utopianism of the postwar moment as political culture, textual culture or any other facet.

¹³³ 'Why print this picture, anyway, of these three American boys dead upon an alien shore? Is it to hurt people? To be morbid? Those are not the reasons. The reason is that words are never enough' ('Three Americans', *Life*, 20 September 1943, p. 34).

¹³⁴ Winter, p. 3.

The visual culture of UNESCO represents a key point in the history of our own age of globalisation. The publications of its first decade exhibit the increasingly global mobility of images in the postwar world. Tied up with an internationalist perspective, both the themes and the paradoxes at the heart of this visual culture are still relevant in the twenty-first century. For instance, the cover of a recent edition of *Courier* showed a photomontage of a young man with a video camera for a head standing in front of a block of flats (fig. 5.5.2).¹³⁵ For a special issue titled 'How Youth Drive Change', the illustration exhibits with striking economy how issues of youth, urban space, and the future are still paramount in the debates about internationalist promotion of human welfare pursued and promoted by UNESCO. Moreover, with his video camera for a head, the image of the young man emphasises the role of visuality and image-making technology in this debate. Another example of the persistence of the themes considered here might be the film *Life in a Day* (2011). Distributed by National Geographic Films for its cinematic release, it is a splicing together of user-generated content from across the world on one particular day, 24 July 2010, submitted to YouTube. *Life in a Day* – a hybrid product of social and mass media formats – represents a twenty-first century equivalent of Steichen's mirror, 'explaining man to man'.¹³⁶ As Sandeen observed, 'we now have a fraught version of the world for which [Steichen] longed: the Cold War is gone, people communicate with each other beyond national boundaries, and the power of images, as disturbing as some of them are, rivets world attention.'¹³⁷

UNESCO was not the main agent of the realisation of this state of affairs, but as a conscious effort to shape an international public sphere, it is an illuminating prism through which to study the genealogy of the international public sphere. UNESCO speaks of broader developments than the organisation alone. Reflection on the historical articulations of an imagined global community or public sphere highlights the manner in which two cultural practices – architecture and photography – emerged as central to processes of globalisation in the second half of the twentieth century. More broadly, it also highlights how globalised images in the twenty-first century may produce a familiarity with what other places and faces look like, but that this is not the same as world understanding. We may be acquainted with the diverse cultures of the world, but this awareness does not mean that we are party to a world culture. If we

¹³⁵ *UNESCO Courier*, 3 (2011).

¹³⁶ *Life in a Day*, 2011 <<http://www.youtube.com/user/lifeinaday>> [accessed 20 October 2011].

¹³⁷ Sandeen, 'The International Reception of The Family of Man', 344–355 (p. 354).

wish to pursue the ideal of world citizenship articulated by many internationalists in the utopian postwar moment, a more thorough understanding of the global circulation of images and their function in constituting transnational imagined communities and an international public sphere is paramount.

As discussed in the previous chapter, resulting from the urban destruction of the war and the pressing challenges of reconstruction, urban space held a prominent position in relation to questions of Western European identity in the three comparator nations. In this chapter, it has been revealed how the early campaigns of UNESCO articulated an equation of civilisation with urban life: The city was the site of the struggle for human rights through the ages; it was depicted as the site in which democratic citizenship and tolerance are exercised; and urban development was deemed synonymous with progress. Through these early campaigns, UNESCO projected a Western European or transatlantic urban ideal as the model for future development. Photography was central not simply in pursuing this end but in forging the cultural significance of the city in the period and even in both shaping the very idea of mass communication and a global audience. Over the course of this study, analysis has journeyed from the depiction of local ruins in publications like *Ici ... fut Aunay* (1947), to the projection around the world of the image of the modernist UNESCO headquarters. Amongst other issues, it has tackled the role of urban photographic imagery in the instrumentalisation of war ruins for the purposes of national reconciliation, in the promotion of an internationalised image of modernist architecture, and in the invitation to identify with transnational imagined communities.

Drawing on the foregoing discussion, the detailed consideration of UNESCO's early years pursued in this chapter is a vital terminal point for this investigation of the intersecting local, national and transnational postwar approaches to imagined spaces, communities and futures in which photography is inextricably implicated. UNESCO promoted the conception and the protection of a shared cultural heritage (prompted by wartime destruction), and a shared utopian vision of the future (symbolised in the image of the future city). The intersection of notions of a global cultural heritage and of a future-focused internationalist modernism make UNESCO's use of photography and its public image a vital element of this sustained examination of the transition from enmity to unity between the three comparator nations in the immediate aftermath of the Second World War. In the early campaigns of UNESCO it is possible to trace various (sometimes contradictory) ways in which an international public sphere was promoted

in the Cold War moment. It was a peace effort which was predicated on international cooperation and mass communication by word and image; which facilitated the inclusion of West Germany, along with France and Britain, notwithstanding their shared history of deadly conflict; and which found its symbolic expression in the future-focused, photographic architecture of the organisation's Parisian headquarters building.

Chapter 6: Comparative Conclusions from a Cultural History of Postwar Urban Photography

Let's give back to the spatial and the visual the place they deserve in the history of political and social relations.

Umberto Eco¹

In contrast to an iconoclastic approach declaiming photography or a positivist approach striving to see past the failings of specific images to an historical reality beyond, this study has interrogated individual photographs and modes of photography, integrating them into a discussion of key discourses and topics of public debate about reconstruction in Britain, France and West Germany to examine the role of the medium in the postwar moment and contribute to the account of a Western European cultural identity after 1945. This is not the social or political history Barthes was demanding when he denounced *The Family of Man* exhibition for suppressing history and holding viewers back at the surface of a sentimental vision.² Nonetheless, this examination of postwar urban photography's prominent representational strategies and modes of address is essential for an understanding of postwar reconstruction and mid-twentieth century visual culture, demonstrating as it does that the two are inextricably linked and, moreover, that the former can only be understood with reference to the latter. It is the cultural history of the medium's formative influence on ways of visualising specific problems in the postwar moment, and how that visualisation informed ways of conceptualising political and social dynamics still pertinent today.

Recognising the need for an account of the emergence of a Western European cultural identity in the aftermath of the Second World War, this comparative study of urban photography in Britain, France and West Germany between 1945 and 1958 has addressed two significant deficiencies in the historiography of the period of reconstruction. First is the relative paucity of cross-national or transnational

¹ Umberto Eco, 'A Photograph', in *Faith in Fakes: Travels in Hyperreality* (London: Minerva, 1995), pp. 213–217 (p. 215).

² Barthes, pp. 100–102 (p. 101).

comparative perspectives in cultural histories of the postwar reconstruction. Rather than simply ranging different local or national narratives alongside one another, this study has sought to synthesise analyses of the three interconnected countries, accounting for both the meaningful differences and significant similarities of urban photography in public circulation during the period. Secondly, this study has addressed a marked lack of critical reflection on photography as an aspect of everyday visual culture. In addition to addressing these oversights in historical writing about Western European reconstruction, this study represents a theoretical contribution to the writing of cultural history. The methodology outlined in chapter one highlighted four main facets of the photograph in use: the relevance of discursive formations in forging the meaning or significance of a photograph, the importance of visuality in the interpretation of the photograph, the capacity of the photograph to exhibit agency, and the iconoclastic nature of the public sphere for which photography is produced and in which it circulates. In pursuing this methodology, the study exemplifies a means by which to interpret the functioning and implications of photography in a particular historical moment and to evaluate the broader implications it might have for social and political relations.

This methodology facilitated a number of important and integrated arguments about key modes of urban image-making and publication between 1945 and 1958. Chapter two addressed ruin photobooks, the various local and national frames of reference relevant to their circulation and the manner in which they shaped the cultural significance of war-damage in the immediate aftermath of conflict. Examining pertinent similarities and differences between local and national self-representations and across the three nations, it demonstrated how paper memorials to the ruins or photographic reconstructions of lost spaces worked to offer particular ways of looking at and thinking about urban destruction, influencing the formation of cultural memory and imagined communities in the immediate postwar years. Chapter three excavated the architectural photography in debates about the postwar housing problem, considering cross-national debate and cultural exchange in discourses of reconstruction and demonstrating photography's role in establishing the cultural conditions of possibility which facilitated the high-rise building boom. It gave an account of the ocularcentrism of postwar architectural debate and practice, underpinned by specific modes of photography and a vocabulary saturated in visual terms, and resulting in a photographic architecture which conceptualised buildings as visual images rather than lived spaces. Chapter four tackled the important part played by the transnational circulation of urban photography

in manufacturing the cultural plausibility of a Western European identity in the shadow of the Cold War. Addressing spectacle and escapism, glamour and voyeurism, photographic portraits and humanisation, as well as the encouragement of amateur photography, it reflected on how urban images and the pleasures they offered promoted a transnational Western European imagined community. Chapter five examined the question of intercultural relations pursued through the instrumentalisation of urban photography in the early campaigns of UNESCO. Analysing the commitment to photography as a 'universal language' and its entanglement with various conceptions of internationalism, it highlighted the projection in postwar internationalist discourse of predominantly Western European or transatlantic ways of seeing and thinking about culture and the built environment.

Four overarching conclusions emerge from this study:

1. Postwar urban reconstruction in the three comparator nations took place within a dynamic transnational public sphere constituted by the exchange of ideas and images exemplifying regional, national and Western European concerns.

Occurring in the aftermath of the Second World War, the escalation of the Cold War and the conflicts of decolonisation, the rapid and radical shift in Western Europe from a very destructive enmity to a tangible sense of unity was intimately bound up with a reshaping of notions of European community or identity. Within the nexus of regional, national and Western European concerns relevant to the postwar decade, the image of the city was a potent symbol in this reimagining of cities, peoples and futures for a postwar world. For instance, the different local and national discursive formations in which ruin imagery circulated intersected with convergent transnational visual cultures and architectural practice vis-à-vis mass housing, while the illustrated press invited identification with a transnational imagined community based on the emotional appeals of urban imagery and UNESCO publications projected a normative vision of the West as an urbanised civilisation and a universal aspiration for other nations. The photographic representation of postwar urban space in the three comparator nations was thus a dynamic part of a process of cultural Europeanisation – the positing, promotion and projection of an imagined community joined by bonds of shared culture.

This process of Europeanisation was in no sense simple, uniform, unidirectional or complete in the three comparator nations. Rather, as this study unearths, there was

a dialogic relation between the regional, national and the transnational; a negotiation, not a negation, of one by another. Transnational phenomena (like the circulation of syndicated images in the illustrated press, debates between planners and architects, or the operation of international agencies like UNESCO) prompted acts of distinction and contradistinction between national identities, as much as they constituted convergences or uniformities between the character of cultural artefacts and the everyday experiences of people in different nations. Despite persistent differences – indeed, because of active distinction asserted through a cultural practice like architecture – it is apparent that the transnational circulation of urban images was not simply one mode of circulation in the postwar period; it was a defining characteristic of postwar visual culture.

Thus, we can speak of the transnational optic of postwar urban reconstruction.³ In the postwar moment, transnational cultural exchange was the lens through which urban reconstruction was viewed in these three comparator countries of Western Europe, creating a mosaic of different imagined spaces, imagined communities and imagined futures which were dependent on one another for the generation of their meaning and significance. The different local, regional or national appeals to audiences made through the photographic representation of urban space did not simply co-exist with one another; they were interactive with one another, a common transnational perspective facilitating the dissolution of some differences while simultaneously strengthening others.⁴ Of course, this study does not claim to identify an originary moment in the idea of Europe. It argues rather that the period of postwar reconstruction was a crucial moment in the development and advancement of a Western European cultural identity and, moreover, that the photographic representation of urban space was pivotal in this moment and central to this phenomenon. The analytical advantage of a comparative and transnational approach to the cultural history of the period is that it brings into relief this national / European dynamic – that is, the interrelation of national self-representation and the assertion of transnational identities. As Sven Beckert and others have noted, ‘history as an academic discipline grew up alongside

³ Discussing historical preservation in Germany, Rudy Koshar describes a German national optics of the early twentieth century as ‘a multifaceted way of seeing the historical nation in the physical environment’ (Koshar, *Germany’s Transient Pasts*, p. 23).

⁴ ‘Transnational ties can dissolve some national barriers while simultaneously strengthening others’ (Patricia Clavin, ‘Defining Transnationalism’, *Contemporary European History*, 14 (2005), 421–439 (p. 431)).

the nation-state and became one of its principal ideological pillars'.⁵ There is a requirement to challenge the national paradigm in historical writing not only to develop more self-reflexive methodologies, but also to give account of the transnational or global networks and exchange which became more multiform and influential in contemporary history. Transnational history, as Patricia Clavin argues, 'allows us to reflect on, while at the same time going beyond, the confines of the nation'.⁶

2. Visuality was a determining factor in the discourses and practice of postwar urban reconstruction in Western Europe.

Photography and the industrial city were two of modernity's most dramatic, captivating and life-changing developments. In the unprecedented 'opportunity' offered by the postwar moment, the representational strategies of the former were decisively bound up with the reimagining and rebuilding of the latter. An understanding of photography and the city has been both advanced and hampered by the metaphors of the text and the practice of 'reading' cultural artefacts (be they buildings or photographs of buildings). Notions of textuality, though useful, risk generating cultural analyses which overlook the visual character and affective capacities of both urban space and photography and thus fail to capture the impact of the medium on the reconstruction project. The metaphor of the text which dominated photography studies in its first two decades is countered here by a prioritisation of visuality as an analytical category.

I have worked with two related notions of visuality in this study. Firstly, the visual characteristics of a photograph; that is, the formal elements of the photograph which help construct a particular perspective on that which is depicted, distinct from (albeit in collaboration with) its caption or the surrounding text. Secondly, the privileging in the period of the visual aspects of the reconstruction project; in other words, the conception of the challenges of reconstruction (rebuilding cities, rehabilitating communities, articulating futures, forging memories, refashioning identities) either as visual problems or as problems which visual culture was deemed particularly well-suited to address. The visual culture of postwar reconstruction thus encompassed not just material like photographs, but a vocabulary saturated in visual metaphors and references to sight or viewpoints – such as 'the face of the city', 're-educating the eye' or 'a window on the world'. Visuality in this broad sense was a central preoccupation in

⁵ Bayly and others, 1440–1464 (p. 1446).

⁶ Clavin, 421–439 (p. 438).

all three comparator countries during the first postwar years. The faculty of vision, the discussion of the visual and various modes of image-making or 'photographic seeing' cut across questions of architecture, memory and identity in the period. Shaping debate, decisions and the built environment itself, this preoccupation with vision and seeing frequently collapsed the distinction between images of buildings and buildings as images; between images of cities and cities as images. Only an approach which addresses the photograph as a productive, visual and intentional object, and which excavates this ocularcentric vocabulary, can outline the multiplicity of ways in which visuality shaped the material and psychological project that was postwar reconstruction.

3. Iconoclasm was a key historical agent in globalising processes of the postwar moment.

The local, national and transnational circulation of urban photographs was characterised by a constant clash of images, as was the appropriation of such photographs in the promotion of transnational imagined communities and the internationalist agenda of peace and human rights. Images of ruins, photographic portraits of individuals, aerial views of cities, fashion photography, slum photography, street photography and architectural photography all existed in an unceasing cycle of iconoclasm. One photograph was set against another. Yet another was reframed, reinterpreted and reused. The image of a city, a style or a nation was countered by opposing images forged through photographs. One mode of photographic representation prompted the production of countless examples, which in turn prompted a slew of opposing images which worked to overwrite their predecessors. Within the iconoclastic processes and conditions of image-production and circulation of the postwar moment, photography's productive force extended from shaping memory of the past war to influencing the style of mass housing; from forging city images conveyed across national borders to informing the pursuit of peace. Circulating in local, national and transnational realms, photographs journeyed through different spheres in a variety of publications, acquiring new meanings and significance and becoming vehicles for different imagined communities.

To some, this may seem like a strange history of postwar reconstruction in Western Europe. Photographers, politicians and planners, along with victims, victors and vanquished, are all largely absent. Photographs, in turn, seem credited with not

just agency, but almost autonomy. However, it is necessary that the agency of such images be considered distinct from the agency of particular individuals. The capacity of photographs to do things and not just depict things demands that historical writing consider the photograph not just as a product of a particular moment, but as an actor within historical processes. Jan Assmann has characterised cultural memory as 'that body of reusable texts, images, and rituals specific to each society in each epoch, whose "cultivation" serves to stabilize and convey that society's self-image'.⁷ Cultural exchange, whether within local networks or across national boundaries, places such artefacts into new spheres, with the potential to generate new forms of community or identity. To consider the productive force of photography only as an extension of human agency is to miss the broader ramifications of a self-perpetuating war of images like that witnessed in the postwar decade. Only the comparative approach adopted here, addressing local, national and transnational circulation of images, can reveal the extent of the iconoclastic forces in operation and situate them in the context of the twentieth century's processes of globalisation – that 'gradual thickening of connections across national boundaries, their increasing penetration into previously untouched localities, and the emergence of a common set of concerns that define a universal cosmopolitan community'.⁸

4. Utopian thinking and cultural memory were governing concepts of both the urban spaces which photography helped shape and the media spaces in which urban photography circulated.

From ancient city-states to the United States, urban centres have always been an important focal point for collective identities. Preceding generations leave their traces in the urban environment which offers a sense of community to those that follow. In the immediate postwar years, efforts to reconnect to the past were common to the three comparator countries. At the same time, the notion of a better future was as powerful and potent as this sense of history. This dual 'presence of the past' and 'future made present' were important cultural forces which photography helped give shape to.⁹ From the Unité building, to the Skylon and the UNESCO headquarters; from Greek temples and the Bastille, to the ruins of Caen, Coventry and Cologne – in the postwar years, the

⁷ Jan Assmann, 'Collective Memory and Cultural Identity', *New German Critique*, trans. by John Czaplicka, 1995, 125–133 (p. 132).

⁸ Armitage, pp. 165–176 (p. 165).

⁹ Koselleck, pp. 260 & 259.

modernist monuments and iconic ruins were charged emblems of a better future and talismans of a past made distant by the intervening war. Such historically-minded and future-oriented perspectives on architecture and urban space were not necessarily antithetical. Rather, photographs evoking both circulated in the discursive formations of the time in a dynamic relation with one another.¹⁰

Like the ruins which faced erosion or the new modernist façades quickly sullied, such significance could not be preserved unchanged. The star of modernist architecture waned and the ruins lost their immediacy as the soot-blackened patina was washed clean by rain. But in the first postwar years, the city itself was meaningful as the place in which history could be read and the future written. The UNESCO logo, on a pale blue flag above the modernist headquarters building, captures this perspective on urban space between the war's end and the late fifties which Bullock has termed 'the place of the past in the vision of the future'.¹¹ The ruins of ancient Greece, emblem of learning, culture and civilisation, offered a universal and unifying symbol for an international organisation pursuing a peaceful future from its modernist headquarters in the French capital. Cultural memory and utopian thinking were mutually supporting concepts, not mutually exclusive. This is not to suggest the emergence of a homogenous Western European memory of the Second World War or of an undifferentiated view of the future across the three comparator countries. Rather, analysis demonstrates that in the first postwar years, the image of the city accommodated the dynamic interplay of visualisations of the past and the future. During the reconstruction, the circulation of urban photography forged a representation – an image of the city – in which the valued historically-minded and future-oriented

¹⁰ Indeed, many modernist buildings were conceived or construed as 'living memorials' (Gillis, pp. 3–24 (p. 13)). Drawing on Mass-Observation interviews conducted during the war and in its immediate aftermath, José Harris has argued that the relatively fast progress from the end of the First World War to the beginning of the Second precipitated a loss of faith in the sort of memorials that were built after 1918. Public buildings, like schools and hospitals, were deemed to be a more fitting legacy of or memorial to the sacrifices made between 1939 and 1945 (José Harris, 'War Socialism' and Its Aftermath: Debates About a New Social and Economic Order in Britain, 1945–50', in *The Postwar Challenge: Cultural, Social, and Political Change in Western Europe, 1945–1958*, ed. by Dominik Geppert (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), pp. 179–188). The preservation of ruined churches in Hamburg, Berlin, Hannover and Cologne amidst postwar architecture suggests a comparable co-existence of signs of the past and of the future in the city, as does a French town like Saint-Lô which encompasses a striking range of ruins and modernist additions, alongside the Notre-Dame church which was repaired in a contrasting stone in an unadorned style, making clear the old and new elements within the same building.

¹¹ Nicholas Bullock, 'Valuing the Past, Seizing the Future: Towards an Architecture of Reconstruction', in *Living with History, 1914–1964: Rebuilding Europe after the First and Second World Wars and the Role of Heritage Preservation*, ed. by Nicholas Bullock and Luc Verpoest (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2011), pp. 349–363 (p. 349).

perspectives were alloyed. Only a study which addresses different modes of photographic representation across a range of publishing formats in the first years of postwar reconstruction can highlight the interplay of visualisations of both the past and the future. In doing so, what is revealed is the centrality of cultural memory and utopian thinking as vital concepts in the representation and reconstruction of urban space in Western Europe, and the transnational communities with which urban space became identified.

* * * * *

Historians have described the first years of the postwar period as a 'hinge moment'.¹² The ways of seeing shaped in the postwar decade are vectors of value and significance which cut across the second half of the twentieth century. A vital aspect of this hinge moment was the image of the city. Within the broadly defined project of postwar reconstruction and the charged relations between nations of the early Cold War years, architecture and photography were crucial aspects of the national cultures of the three comparator nations and the transnational cultural exchange between them. Circulating in a network of intersecting local, national and transnational cultures of the first postwar decade, the image of the city was a key symbol which enabled both a working through of the past and the articulation of a harmonious future. Owing to the centrality of urban photography, the question of vision and the character of visuality strongly influenced the course of reconstruction in Western Europe. The meaning and significance of such symbols were continually reasserted and contested in a series of iconoclastic practices. Within this dynamic visual culture, notwithstanding the markedly different wartime experiences of the three nations, cultural memory and utopian thinking were central concepts, influencing and informing the local, national and transnational communities with which urban space became identified through the various interactive visualisations of the past and the future.

As prologue to a discussion of the image wars of the last decade in the United States, Mitchell wrote:

¹² 'In social and cultural terms, the immediate postwar period was the hinge between a more traditional, deferential and authoritarian past and the pluralistic, meritocratic, and leisure-orientated consumer society of the present day' (Dominik Geppert, 'Introduction', in *The Postwar Challenge: Cultural, Social, and Political Change in Western Europe, 1945-1958*, ed. by Dominik Geppert (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), p. 2). 'The 1940s and 1950s form the hinge on which the history of Europe in the twentieth century turns' (Schumann and Bessel, p. 5).

Every history is really two histories. There is the history of what actually happened, and there is the history of the perception of what happened. The first kind of history focuses on the facts and figures; the second concentrates on the images and words that define the framework within which those facts and figures make sense.¹³

Mitchell employs the distinction to make clear the focus of his book, but while as concepts these two histories can be parsed, they are inextricable in practice. To understand the history of what happened, we must tackle the history of the perception of what happened. This is no simple task. One of the major challenges of this study has been finding a vocabulary which is both sufficiently precise and clear to pinpoint the historical importance of the medium, as well as being sufficiently allusive and illuminating to capture the dynamic and productive discursive formations within which photographs circulate: a choice between a dry, lifeless language on one hand, and the risk of falling too often into spatial and visual metaphors (or worse still, theoretical abstraction) on the other. Despite this bind, the active role of photography in shaping social, political and economic histories urgently demands closer attention; particularly by scholars of the postwar period and since, owing to the exponential growth in the means of making and circulating of images and the centrality of visibility it has precipitated. The refinement of the verbal means to critically analyse visual culture must surely be one of the more pressing interdisciplinary challenges of the first decades of the twentieth-century, alongside the development of appropriate publishing formats to meet this challenge. The need to understand photography becomes more and more urgent, but if historians continue to consider photography as a more or less transparent medium for illustrating narratives or corroborating hypotheses deduced by other means, its formative role will remain invisible. Joel Meyerowitz, who photographed New York's Ground Zero during the months of the site's clearance, reputedly said when first turned away by police, 'To me, no photographs meant no history.' His is an incitement to make images, but it could also act as a call for historians of the postwar period to recognise the decisive role of images in the making of history.

¹³ Mitchell, *Cloning Terror*, p. xi.

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